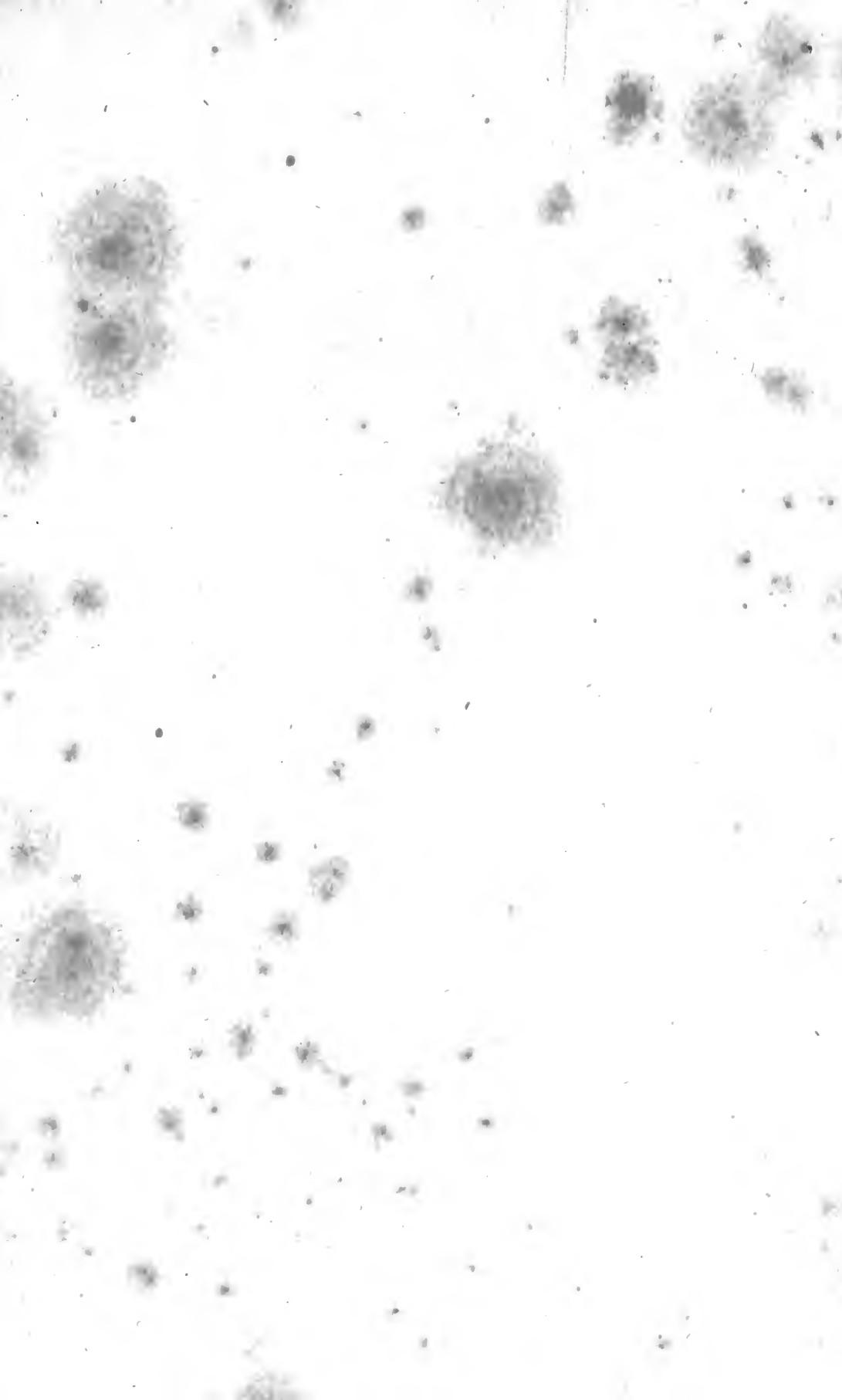
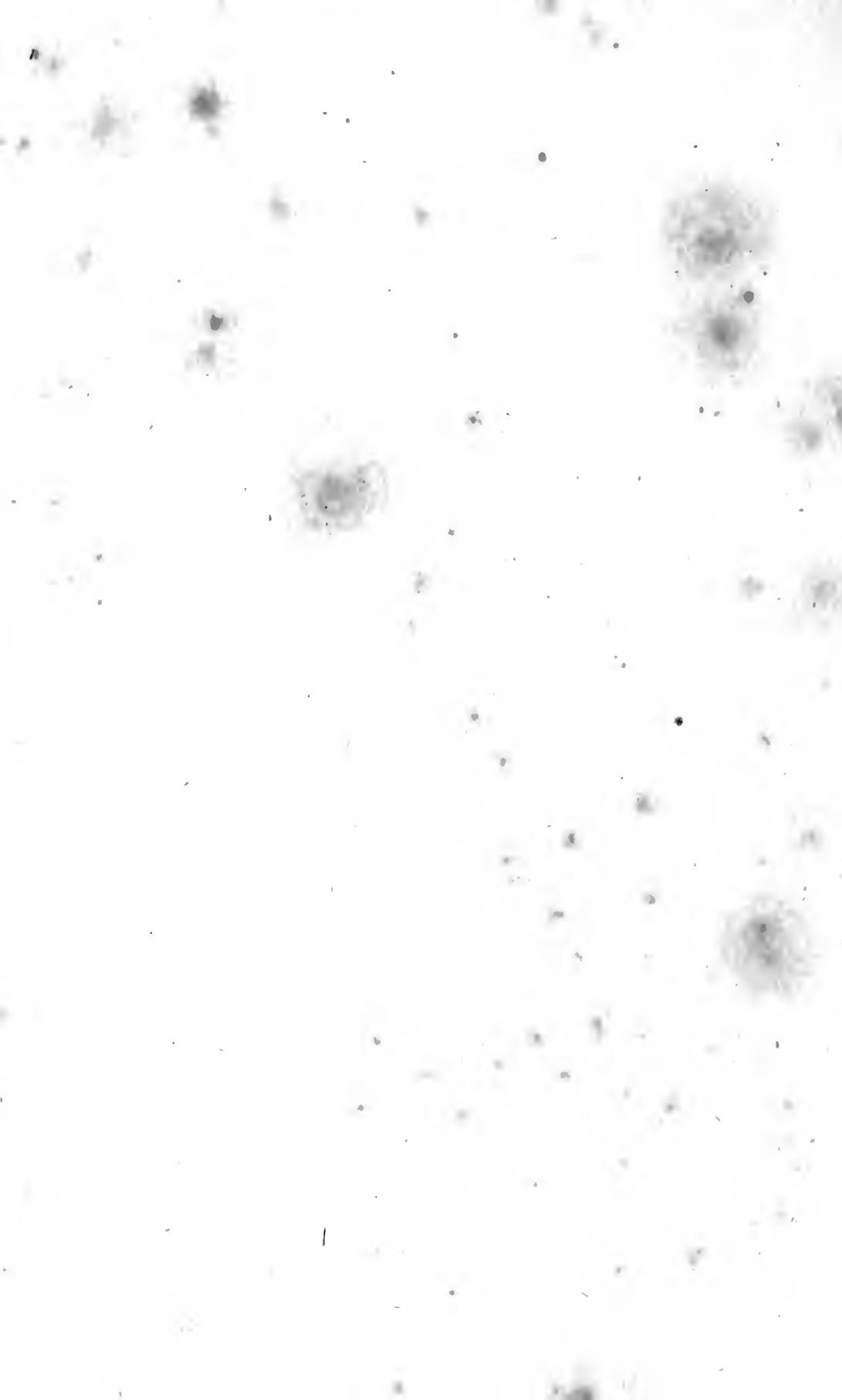




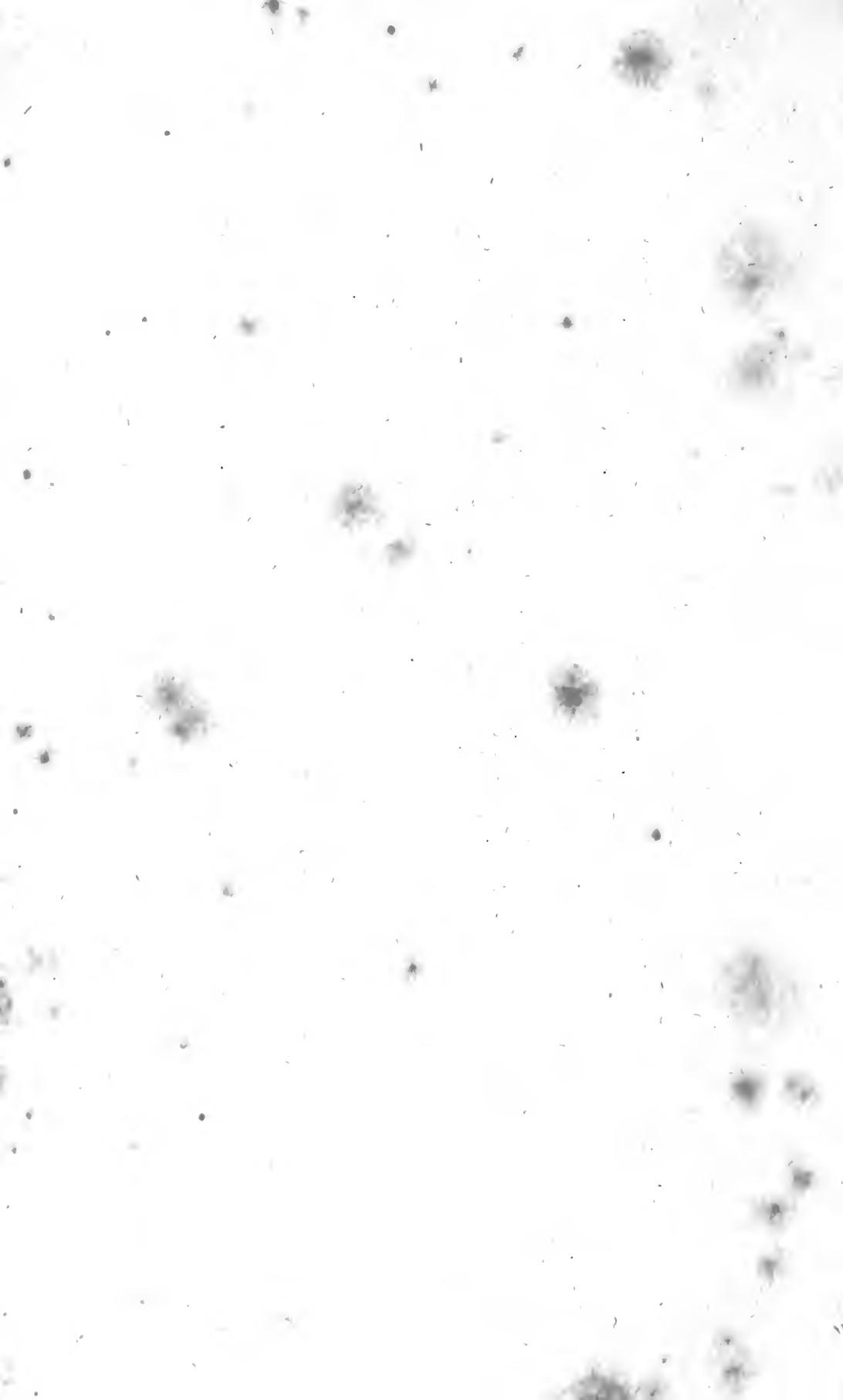
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# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

## WRITINGS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON,

WITH

PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE ATTACK THEY CONTAIN

ON THE

## M E M O R Y

OF THE

## LATE GEN. HENRY LEE.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

BY *H. LEE.*

---

SECOND EDITION,

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY *CHARLES CARTER LEE.*

---

PHILADELPHIA:

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## CONTENTS.

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### LETTER I.

Mr. Jefferson's letter containing the attack on the character of Gen. Lee, with observations on it. Gen. Washington's letter to Mr. Jefferson, October 13, 1789, with remarks. Secret hostility of Mr. Jefferson to Gen. Washington. Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Madison, - - - PAGE 5

### LETTER II.

Observations on Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Madison, on the state of parties in 1794. Mr. Genet's conduct. Democratic Societies. Society of the Cincinnati. Western Insurrection, - - - - - 21

### LETTER III.

The same subject continued. Conduct of Mr. Jefferson with respect to the Western Insurrection. Letter of Gen. Washington to Gen. Lee, October 20, 1794. Mr. Jefferson's remarks on and connection with Col. Burr—His calumnies against Alexander Hamilton. Burr's Conspiracy. Luther Martin, - - - - - 45

### LETTER IV.

Continuation and conclusion of Remarks on the letter to Mr. Madison. Mr. Jefferson's attacks on Gen. Washington and his friends—His conduct in reference to Jay's Treaty. Jacobins. Public Debt, - - - - 57

### LETTER V.

Mr. Jefferson's calumnies against the friends and measures of Gen. Washington. Impossibility of Mr. Jefferson's believing his own accusations. Mr. Adams. Henry, alias *le Comte de Crillon*. Mr. Jefferson's inconsistency with regard to the funding system, &c. - - - - 73

### LETTER VI.

Mr. Jefferson's famous letter to Mazzei—His disingenuousness with regard to it. Mr. Giles's speech, - - - - - 80

## LETTER VII.

Observations on Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Van Buren, 29th June, 1824.  
 Loss of Gen. Washington's Diary and of the correspondence respecting  
 the letter to Mazzei. Dr. Stuart's statement. Levées, &c. Mr. Pickering.  
 Mr. Jefferson's correspondence with Mazzei. Estrangement between  
 Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson. Criticism on Mr. Tucker's Remarks.  
 Mr. Lewis' letter on this subject. Mr. Jefferson's attack on Judge Mar-  
 shall, - - - - - . . . . . 91

## LETTER VIII.

Observations on Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Van Buren continued. Re-  
 marks on Mr. Jefferson's letters to Mr. Monroe, Gen. Gates, Col. Burr,  
 Mr. Campbell, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Taylor, stigmatizing Gen. Wash-  
 ington, his friends and his measures. Gen. Washington's note to Gen.  
 Lee—His regard for Gen. Lee. Debate in French Chamber of Deputies  
 respecting Gen. Washington, - - - - - 107

## LETTER IX.

Mr. Jefferson's measures in the Legislature of Virginia. The Declaration  
 of Independence—Remarks on an article on this subject in the New York  
 Review. Comparison between Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Mason. Mr. Jeff-  
 ferson elected Governor of Virginia—His flight from Richmond, &c. &c.  
 Remarks on Gen. Lee's Memoirs. Remarks on Mr. Jefferson's defence  
 of his conduct—Charges brought against him in the House of Delegates  
 —His Abdication. Gen. Nelson. Observations on Gerardin's work, 123

## LETTER X.

Gen. Lee—his early life—his military services—his contributions to the  
 public cause. Mr. Jefferson's conduct in this respect. Gen. Greene's  
 letter to the President of Congress relative to Gen. Lee's services. Gen.  
 Washington's letters on the same subject, - - - - - 147

## LETTER XI.

Mr. Jefferson appointed Minister to France—His "*Chinese Policy*" with  
 regard to Commerce. Mr. Jefferson and Genet—His connection with  
 Callender. Purchase of Louisiana. The Embargo. Gunboat System.  
 Mr. Monroe's mission to France. Mr. Livingston. Mr. Jefferson's pre-  
 tensions to the credit of Economical Reform—to Literature and Science  
 —His Ethical Doctrines—He speaks with contempt of St. Paul—Ridi-  
 cules Plato—Lauds and welcomes Tom Paine—His Materialism, 155

## LETTER XII.

Gen. Lee's subsequent career—He prepares the Address to Gen. Washington presented by the citizens of Alexandria, and the Resolutions in Congress on the Death of Gen. Washington—Letters to him on behalf of Mrs. Washington. Proceedings in Congress on the subject of a Monument to Gen. Washington. A beautiful marble Sarcophagus to contain the remains of Gen. Washington presented by Mr. John Struthers of Philadelphia. Alien and Sedition Laws. Designs of France against the Union. Effects of the Embargo. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams. Gen. Lee shares in the hostility of Mr. Jefferson against Gen. Washington, Hamilton, Knox, Jay, Marshall, and others, - - - - - 170

## LETTER XIII.

Gen. Washington—His Character. Mr. Jefferson's insinuations, his misstatements and contradictions on this subject—His letter to Dr. Jones, with remarks. Gen. Washington's letter to Mr. Nicholas respecting the secret hostility of Mr. Jefferson, - - - - - 182

## LETTER XIV.

Alexander Hamilton—his character and services—his Duel with Col. Burr—Mr. Jefferson's misstatements and calumnies respecting him—his rancour against him—his letter to Mellish. Mr. Tucker's observations on the character of Gen. Hamilton, with remarks, - - - - - 194

## LETTER XV.

Gen. Knox—his character—his services—Mr. Jefferson's bitterness against him—Gen. Washington's great esteem for him—Opinions of Lord Moira, Dr. Thacher, and the Marquis Chastellux respecting him—Mr. Jefferson's heartless notice of his pecuniary difficulties. Reconciliation of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams, when the latter agrees to sacrifice his former friends—Mr. Jefferson's letter on the occasion, with remarks. Kentucky Resolutions. Strange discovery of Mr. Adams with respect to the Navy. Mr. Jefferson opposed to the Navy—denounces it and its advocates in 1799—his letter to Mr. Gerry. Gen. Knox the father of the Navy. Mr. Humphreys' publication on this subject. Note respecting Mr. Jefferson and the Navy—His contempt for “mechanics.” Mr. Jefferson's indelicacy in violating the sanctity of social intercourse, - - - - - 205

## LETTER XVI.

John Jay—his character—his services—his Treaty with Great Britain—Mr. Jefferson's malevolence and continual slanders against him. Justice done him by Mr. Adams with regard to signing the Declaration of Inde-

pendence. Mr. Jefferson's duplicity in this matter—he attacks the reputation of Mr. Hooper, - - - - - 221

### LETTER XVII.

Richard Henry Lee—his character and services. Mr. Jefferson's injustice to him—striking instance of it, with remarks. Singular adjurations used by Mr. Jefferson on particular occasions—His unfairness to Mr. Lee in his account of the circumstances attending the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, &c. Remarks on Mr. Jefferson's overture to Mr. Randolph in England. Mr. Lee's attack on and defeat of a British party on the shores of the Potomac. Mr. Jefferson's unfair criticism on the Style of Mr. Lee and his brother Arthur. The opinion of "Junius" respecting that of Arthur Lee. Arthur Lee's letter to the Earl of Shelburne. Criticism on Mr. Jefferson's style. Mr. Lee more eloquent and a better scholar than Mr. Jefferson, - - - - - 230

### LETTER XVIII.

John Marshall, (Chief Justice U. S.)—his character and services—As statesman, diplomatist, author or judge, the constant theme of Mr. Jefferson's obloquy and abuse. Mr. Jefferson's calumnies not believed even by his partisans. Remarks on the Jeffersoniana. The statements in Marshall's Life of Washington corroborated by Mr. Jefferson's attacks on them. Anecdote of Mr. Bayard, proving that Mr. Jefferson's *Anas* are not to be relied on. Judge Marshall's political creed coincided with that of Gen. Washington—His mission to France. Mr. Jefferson on this occasion grossly slanders him, and abandons the rights and honour of his country on occasion of the outrages of France—His letter to Mr. Gerry, June 21, 1797. Judge Marshall's account of the infamous conduct of Talleyrand and Barras violently denied by Mr. Jefferson, but by no other person—its truth confirmed by Napoleon Bonaparte. Perpetual contradictions to be found between the different portions of Mr. Jefferson's writings—Ample proof of this—South Carolina Yazoo Company—The Judiciary—The Public Press—France and England—French Jacobins—His Inaugural Address, &c. - - - - - 243

### POSTSCRIPT.

*Extract from the New York Review for April, 1839, with Remarks.*

On Mr. Jefferson's credibility as an historical witness—The fallaciousness of his historical testimony—His wanton and unjust disparagement of the characters of the most eminent men in our annals. Contrast between the "Writings of Washington" and those of Jefferson, - - - - - 259

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IN preparing the following observations, I felt the want of many sources of authority and information, which exist only in the United States.

It was, in consequence, my intention to postpone their publication until after my return. But that having been unexpectedly deferred, I deem it my duty to submit to the public without further delay, such a defence of my father's memory, as the few materials within my reach, have enabled me to compose. The truths it contains will speak for themselves, and any errors which may be discovered, I shall be most willing to acknowledge and retract.

H. LEE.

PARIS, DEC. 2, 1831.

The Notes by the present Editor are enclosed in brackets,  
for the purpose of distinguishing them.

## INTRODUCTION.

[BY THE PRESENT EDITOR.]

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THE object of this work is to defend the memory of General Lee from a vague charge of malicious slander. The method pursued is to ascertain, as distinctly as possible, what communication of General Lee to General Washington was, which Mr. Jefferson alleges to have been slanderous; and then to shew that it was true, and such as it would have been a failure of duty on the part of General Lee to have withheld. To make his defence complete, it was thought necessary to shew, further, that abuse from Mr. Jefferson affords not the slightest proof of demerit, since he heaped it on the heads of the most illustrious men of his country; and that he spared no persons, classes, or nations, who obstructed his purposes or excited his displeasure. To accomplish this, required that extensive examination of his correspondence which will be found in this volume, and demanded, moreover, an inquiry into the justice of those censures which he so profusely applied. This necessarily led to occasional considerations of those leading measures of the federal party which were the objects of Mr. Jefferson's attacks, and the grounds of his reproaches against their authors and supporters. But of these measures no just judgment can be formed without a full and fair consideration of the circumstances under which they were adopted, and the exigencies they were designed to meet. Unfortunately, there is no history of the period referred to which commands the unqualified assent of the whole country. Even the character of Marshall has not yet hushed the whispers of party incredulity; nor did it fall within the scope of his design to go into a minute narrative of any events unconnected with the character and conduct of the great subject of his biography. Besides, it terminates in the midst of that crisis, of the whole of which an accurate and impartial account is so much wanting. Therefore, to prepare the reader as briefly as possible to take

a just view of the subjects of controversy which will be presented to him in the following pages, I can do nothing better than to offer him a few of the most valuable materials for a history of that period.

It would seem impossible that a citizen of this country could desire any evidence better than the testimony of Washington, upon any subject in relation to which he would undertake to bear testimony: for his justice, discernment and love of truth, have received the highest commendation both from friend and foe. The reader will be presented in the course of this work with so many evidences of what was his view of the condition of the country during the eventful years of 1798-9, that I shall insert here an extract from only one of his letters. This was written to Patrick Henry, urging him to resume his place in the councils of his country, to combat the pernicious doctrines which threatened its best interests with destruction. It is dated January 15, 1799, (Vol. II. p. 387,) and after referring to the natural aversion which men of character felt to "expose themselves to the calumnies of their opponents, *whose weapons are detraction,*" he adds: "But at such a crisis as this, *when every thing dear and valuable to us is assailed;* when this party hangs upon the wheels of government as a dead weight, opposing every measure that is calculated for defence and self-preservation, abetting the nefarious views of another nation upon our rights; preferring, as long as they dare contend openly against the spirit and resentment of the people, the interest of France to the welfare of their own country, justifying the former at the expense of the latter;—when every act of their own government is tortured, by constructions they will not bear, into attempts to infringe and trample upon the constitution with a view to introduce monarchy;—when the most unceasing and the purest exertions, which were making to maintain a neutrality, proclaimed by the executive, approved unequivocally by Congress, by the State Legislatures, nay, by the people themselves in various meetings, and to preserve the country in peace, are charged with being measures calculated to favour Great Britain at the expense of France, and all those who had any agency in it are accused of being under the influence of the former and her pensioners; *when measures are systematically and pertinaciously pursued, which must eventually dissolve the union or produce coercion;* I say, when these things have become so obvious, ought characters who are best able to rescue their country from pending evil to remain at home? Rather ought they not to come forward,

and by their talents and influence stand in the breach which such conduct has made on the peace and happiness of this country, and oppose the widening of it?

“Vain will it be to look for peace and happiness, or for the security of liberty or property, if civil discord should ensue. And what else can result from the policy of those among us, who, by all the measures in their power, are driving matters to extremity, if they cannot be counteracted effectually? The views of men can only be known or guessed at by their words or actions. Can those of the *leaders* of opposition be mistaken, then, if judged by this rule? That they are followed by numbers, who are unacquainted with their designs, and suspect as little the tendency of their principles, I am fully persuaded. But if their conduct is viewed with indifference, if there are activity and misrepresentation on one side, and supineness on the other, their numbers accumulated by intriguing and discontented foreigners under proscription, who were at war with their own governments, and the greater part of them with *all* governments, they will increase, and nothing short of Omnipotence can foretell the consequences.”

The venerable patriot whom Washington thus addressed had expressed corresponding views and sentiments, just one week before, to Mr. Blair, of Richmond, in a letter so admirable, so impressive, and so much to my present purpose, that I shall make no apology for transferring it entire from the appendix to the eleventh volume (page 557) of Washington’s Writings, compiled by Mr. Sparks.

*“Red Hill, Charlotte, 8th Jan., 1799.*

“Dear Sir,—

“Your favour of the 28th of last month I have received. Its contents are a fresh proof that there is cause for much lamentation over the present state of things in Virginia. It is possible that most of the individuals who compose the contending factions are sincere, and act from honest motives. *But it is more than probable that certain leaders meditate a change in government.* To effect this, I see no way so practicable as *dissolving the confederacy.* And I am free to own, that in my judgment most of the measures lately pursued by the opposition party, *directly and certainly lead to that end.* If this is not the system of the party they have none, and act *extempore.* I do acknowledge that I am not capable to form a correct judgment on the present politics of the world. The wide extent to which the present contentions have gone will

scarcely permit any observer to see enough in detail to enable him to form any thing like a tolerable judgment on the final result, as it may respect the nations in general. But as to France, I have no doubt in saying that to her it will be calamitous. Her conduct has made it the interest of the great family of mankind to wish the downfall of her present government, because its existence is incompatible with that of all others within its reach. And, whilst I see the dangers which threaten ours from her intrigues and her arms, I am not so much alarmed as at the apprehension of her *destroying the great pillars of all government and of social life*; I mean virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armour, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible. These are the tactics we should study. If we lose these, we are conquered, fallen indeed. In vain may France show and vaunt her diplomatic skill and brave troops; so long as our manners and principles remain sound, there is no danger. But believing, as I do, that these are in danger, that infidelity in its broadest sense, under the name of philosophy, is fast spreading, and that under the patronage of French manners and principles, *every thing that ought to be dear to man is covertly but successfully assailed*, I feel the value of those men among us who hold out to the world the idea that our continent is to exhibit an originality of character; and that, instead of that imitation and inferiority which the countries of the old world have been in the habit of exacting from the new, we shall maintain that high ground upon which nature has placed us, and that Europe will alike cease to rule us and give us modes of thinking.

“But I must stop short, or else this letter will be all preface. These prefatory remarks, however, I thought proper to make, as they point out the kind of character amongst our countrymen most estimable in my eyes. General Marshall and his colleagues exhibited the American character as respectable. France, in the period of her most triumphant fortune, beheld them unappalled. Her threats left them as she found them, mild, temperate, firm. Can it be thought, that with these sentiments I should utter any thing tending to prejudice Gen. Marshall’s election? Very far from it indeed. Independently of the high gratification I felt from his public ministry, he ever stood high in my esteem as a private citizen. His temper and disposition were always pleasant; his talents and integrity unquestioned. These things are sufficient to place that gentleman far above any competitor in the District for Congress. But, when you add the particular information and insight which

he has gained, and is able to communicate to our public councils, it is really astonishing that even blindness itself should hesitate in the choice. But it is to be observed that the efforts of France are to loosen the confidence of the people every where in the public functionaries, *and to blacken characters most eminently distinguished for virtue, talents, and public confidence;* thus smoothing the way to conquest, or those claims of superiority as abhorrent to my mind as conquest, from whatever quarter they may come.

“Tell Marshall I love him, because he felt and acted as a republican, as an American. The story of the Scotch merchants and tories voting for him is too stale, childish and foolish, and is a French *finesse*; an appeal to prejudice, not to reason and good sense. If they say in the day time the sun shines, we must say it is the moon; if, again, we ought to eat our victuals: No, say we, unless it is a ragout or fricassee; and so on to turn fools, in the same proportion as they grow wise. But enough of such nonsense.

“As to the particular words stated to you and said to come from me, I do not recollect saying them. But certain I am, I never said any thing derogatory to General Marshall; but on the contrary, I really should give him my vote for Congress, preferably to any citizen in the state at this juncture, one only excepted, and that one is in another line.

“I am too old and infirm ever again to undertake public concerns. I live much retired, amidst a multiplicity of blessings from that Gracious Ruler of all things, to whom I owe unceasing acknowledgments for his unremitting goodness to me; and if I was permitted to add to the catalogue one other blessing, it should be, that my countrymen should learn wisdom and virtue, and in this their day to know the things that pertain to their peace.

“Farewell. I am, dear sir, yours,

“PATRICK HENRY.”

If the testimony of these cool, sagacious, and impartial men required any thing to give it force, it would be found in the remarkable coincidence of their statements. That a change of government was meditated;—that to effect this, a systematic attempt to dissolve the union was being made;—that to facilitate this design, every thing dear to man, and the foundation of all government, was assailed;—that to break the human mind from all those ties with which the good and great of every age and nation have sought to bind it to virtue and lift

it to God;—and that the weapon chiefly relied on in this nefarious warfare was calumny,—are facts clearly attested by these illustrious witnesses, not in anger, but in sorrow—not to injure, but to preserve. And better evidence it would be impossible to have, except that which may even yet exist among the correspondence of the persons who are implicated in these charges. It was not, however, to have been presumed that any such would have yet been exposed to the public gaze. Yet such was the imprudence which presided over the publication of Mr. Jefferson's Writings, that I turned to them with some confidence, to discover some confirmation of the evidence just adduced. For knowing (as is fully proved in this work) his zealous and active agency in all the political movements of his party in Virginia, it was evident that his correspondence during the period referred to, must, if published, have thrown much light upon the objects of his partizans, and the means by which they were to have been accomplished; and if not published, the very suppression of it would be almost as expressive as the letters themselves could be. For it must be borne in mind that the legislative session of 1798–9 is the epoch of the glory of the Jeffersonians of Virginia. To have been engaged on the successful side of the struggles of that crisis, forms, even now, a title to renown with those exclusive patriots, far superior to any that was won in the fields of the revolution; and it was Mr. Jefferson's aid and guidance through those struggles which has won for him the title of "apostle of liberty." Therefore, as these apostolic services were chiefly rendered by the aid of the pen, it was to be supposed that every scrip which fell from that potent instrument in the hand of Mr. Jefferson, would have been carefully preserved and diligently disseminated. In turning, however, to his correspondence for six months preceding the meeting of the legislature, and the first month of its session, (the period to prepare for and mature the great measures of that body,) we find the whole embraced between pages 393 and 405 of his third volume; and examining these more particularly, we discover but three for the month of June, 1798, not one for July, but one in August, one in September, one in October, one in November, and in the momentous month of December, pregnant with these famous resolutions of Virginia, not one! How does this happen? That his pen was idle, no one can imagine. Indeed, the letters published prove that it was not. Why, then, during this glorified epoch of his followers, are so many of the epistles of

this new apostle hidden from the benighted and inquiring world?

If the absence of some create surmises unfavourable to Mr. Jefferson and his party, those which are published are not likely to produce an opposite impression. On the contrary, they point at a change of government, discuss a dissolution of the Union, apologize for "half-confidences" from fears of exposure through the infidelities of the post-offices, and brandish his favourite weapon, detraction, with his usual ruthlessness and skill. To Mr. Taylor, the mover of Mr. Madison's famous resolutions of '98, he says, (June 1st, 1798,) "Mr. New shewed me your letter on the subject of the patent, which gave me an opportunity of observing what you said as to the effect, with you, of public proceedings, and that it was not unwise now to estimate the separate mass of Virginia and North Carolina, *with a view to their separate existence.*" From this view, however, he gently dissents, among others, for the following curious and not complimentary reason to either party: "*Seeing that we must have somebody to quarrel with,* I had rather keep our New England associates for that purpose, than to see our bickerings transferred to others. They are circumscribed within such narrow limits, and their population so full, that their numbers will ever be the minority; and they are marked, like the Jews, with such a perversity of character, as to constitute, from that circumstance, the natural division of our parties."

To the same gentleman he writes again, (Nov. 26, 1798,) "I owe you a political letter. Yet the infidelities of the post-office and the circumstances of the times are against my writing fully and freely, whilst my own dispositions are as much against mysteries, inuendoes and half confidences. I know not which mortifies me most, that I should fear to write what I think, or my country bear such a state of things. Yet Lyon's Judges and a jury of all nations are objects of national (rational?) fear. We agree in all the essential ideas of your letter. *We agree particularly in the necessity of some reform, and of some better security for civil liberty.*" \* \* \* \* \* "For the present, I should be for resolving the alien and sedition laws to be against the constitution and merely void, and for addressing the other states to obtain similar declarations; and I would not do any thing at this moment which should commit us further, but reserve ourselves to shape our future measures or no measures, by the events which may happen." He concludes with wishing his correspondent health, happiness and safety, italicizing the last word.

One thing, at least, is certain from this letter—that “the apostle of liberty” possessed nothing of the spirit of a martyr; but rather than run the remotest risk of encountering the judges and juries of his country, swallowed the mortification of confessing to his friend that he feared to write what he thought; even when those thoughts were to be used for “the better security of civil liberty.” Now, Professor Tucker asserts that the charge, often made against Mr. Jefferson’s courage, “is preposterous;” and as “conclusive evidence” of the truth of this assertion, avers “that he had determined to challenge” a political assailant in Albemarle, “*and would have done so, if the friend he consulted had seconded his purpose!*” Yet as this proof of courage may not be quite so satisfactory to some readers as Mr. Tucker thinks it must be to “men in general,”—especially as his *flights* are the only memorable parts of his campaigns against Arnold and Tarleton, when, as Governor of Virginia, he should have been, according to the code of the brave, derived from times as early as Homer,

“The first in valour as the first in place,—

it may be juster, for the purposes of this discussion, to admit that Mr. Jefferson was not very valiant. Yet what must have been the subjects of his correspondence with Mr. Taylor, upon which he was afraid to indulge in more than “mysteries, inuendos and half confidences”—afraid of a judge and a jury if he did? We see that they related to reform, to political measures, to action to be adopted to resist the laws of the land, through which he deemed it pertinent to wish his correspondent *safety*, and about which he “*feared*” to write what he thought. What, then, could have been those designs, dangerous to the safety of those who even uttered them, unless such as are stated by Washington and Henry to have been in agitation, and to have been so systematically pursued as to have disturbed their brave and patriotic souls? But far be it from me to impute any thing criminal to Col. Taylor upon authority so unsafe as Mr. Jefferson’s. It is entirely within the laws of his character, congenial with his temper and kindred to his arts,—to instil, under the guise of disapproving,—to stimulate, while pretending to dissuade,—to urge on, while appearing to check,—and, a skilful rider of men as he was, to make the bridle perform the office of the spur. But that Mr. Jefferson had in his own contemplation measures which he deemed grave and dangerous, there can be no doubt; and these letters of his may

fairly be deemed corroborative of those of Washington and Henry.

But if it be supposed that Washington and Henry were mistaken in the views of their political opponents, it will hardly be questioned, at this day, but that they sincerely entertained the belief they have so solemnly recorded. And if such men were alarmed at the condition of their country, and apprehended innovation upon its social, and subversion to its political, system, may not those who habitually regarded the first as the father of his country, and the best human guide his countrymen could follow, be pardoned if they were impressed with similar apprehensions? Would it not then be the dictate of justice as well as of charity to believe that those measures of the two first administrations of the federal government which were peculiarly offensive to their political opponents, were adopted with a view to the preservation of our institutions, rather than a conversion of them into monarchy? For it should be remembered that, from the beginning, those ranged themselves into the federal party who deemed licentiousness the euthanasia of liberty, and that anarchy was the state of transition through which only our republics could degenerate into despotism. It was to guard against this, as well as to repel foreign aggression, and to harmonize our councils where our interests were common, that they conceived the vast design of the federal government, which they endeavoured to endue with strength suitable to its colossal proportions, and adequate to its benevolent ends. From the beginning, too, these federalists thought that they had but imperfectly executed their gigantic plan;—that the states had more common interests than they had consented to submit to united legislation; and had refused to impart to their common government strength and stability sufficient for the proper discharge of the duties confided to its care. When, therefore, the French *subversion* (as Gibbon called it) burst upon the world, and stormed every citadel of order, every defence of virtue, every sanctuary of right;—when those frantic efforts were astonishing mankind with their success, as much as appalling them with their atrocity;—when the fairest portions of Europe had been made hideous by their triumphs, and their prelusive orgies had begun to profane our shores,—was it not natural, nay, was it not necessary, that those same federalists should have been greatly alarmed for their liberties, assailed by this unparalleled hurricane of licentiousness; and for their institutions, attacked by a tempest of anarchy never before equalled upon earth. From all other scourges which

had afflicted mankind, in every age and in every nation, there had been some temporary refuge, some shelter, until the storm might pass. During the heathenism of antiquity, and the barbarism of the middle ages, the temple of a god or the shrine of a saint offered a refuge from despotic fury or popular rage. But French Jacobins, whether native or adopted, treated with equal scorn the sentiments of religion and the feelings of humanity; and all that man had gathered from his experience upon earth, and the revelations he hoped had been made him from the sky, to bless and adorn his mortal existence, and elevate his soul with immortal aspirations, was spurned as imposture by those fell destroyers. They would have depraved man from his humanity, as they attempted to decree God out of his universe. Not contented with France as a subject for their ruthless experiments,—Europe itself being too narrow for their exploits,—they sent their propagandists to the new world, with designs about as charitable as those with which Satan entered Eden. And it was, too, with the fruits of the tree of knowledge that we were to be tempted. We were told, that so great was our ignorance, that we did not even know how to address each other. That the titles of respect and courtesy with which the nations of Christendom had softened their social intercourse were barbarous, aristocratic and abominable, and should be superseded by the polished and democratic address of “*citizen*,” which had the double advantage of being fraternal to the affiliated few, and insulting to the uninitiated many. We were even taught that the homage which it is so delightful to the heart of man to pay to woman, that he can never pronounce her name without prefixing to it some signal of respect, or some articulated sigh of gallantry, was entirely unworthy of him since the French regeneration; and that instead of Madam, Mistress, Lady,—words endeared by so many associations through so many generations, whose very sounds are magic music,—were to be merged at once in the double hiss of the new-coined appellative, “*Citess*.” Their graven lessons, even when partaking largely of the nature of the tiger, lost nothing of the monkey. Human Reason received fantastic homage as a goddess from those who triumphed in the legislative decree that there was no God; and that grave faculty was sought to be honoured by the most ridiculous rites and childish ceremonies. With kindred consistency, doctrines which cut off every prospect of futurity, which shut out every ray of celestial light, and left the mind in the most dismal darkness, were inculcated under

the name of "*Illumination*;" while republicanism, which is the establishment and protection of equal rights by equal laws, was sought to be founded upon the ruins of every source of authority and social stability, whether human or divine. That such chimeras should have been ever bred from the wildest fermentations of thought, and received existence so palpable and prominent, as to have commanded the assent and affected the conduct of a large portion of civilized mankind, is perhaps the most surprising among those social phenomena which perplex the wisest and alarm the bravest. Yet the attentive reader of our history will be convinced that they had so infected our country, that nothing less than the character of Washington, consecrated as it was in the affections of the people, and the strength of the federal government, vigorous from his hand and popular from his virtues, could have resisted the frenzy of the time. The candid inquirer will be satisfied that it was necessary to strain every conservative power of that government to preserve it, and the great interests it protected, from the gravest disaster; and that those who administered it, so far from being fired with the ambitious hope of enlarging its capacities and increasing their legitimate authority, were struggling, and trembling while they struggled, for the existence of both. The result of them was that which has attended too many of the best and purest efforts of patriots, public odium instead of eternal gratitude. But they found a very ample reward for sacrificing themselves, in having saved their country. They brought the constitution safe through the conflict, though, unfortunately, somewhat infected with the odium which was cast upon its champions. The charge that "the great result of our revolution" (as the constitution has been happily called) was only a mitigated form of the British monarchy, designed by its framers ultimately to assume all its attributes, then first gained ground in the popular belief, and was a necessary step in attempting to prove that those who then administered it were monarchists in principle, and were preparing to erect a throne upon the ruins of the republic. As these treasonable imputations were fastened upon the framers of the constitution, it was natural that suspicions should attach to the soundness of their great work; and to this day the same persons who impute to the old federalists monarchical designs, attack the constitution as calculated to have facilitated them. It was, therefore, not only to relieve those good and great men from the unjust imputations cast upon their memory, which has animated me through the irksome labour of my humble share in this

publication—I have hoped, that when they shall be no longer regarded as having been monarchists in principle, their greatest work will not be looked on as the offspring and fit instrument of monarchical designs; and that the vindication of their characters will inure to the benefit of the constitution. It is to be hoped, that when the public mind shall have escaped from that discreditable state of gross delusion which permits the most frivolous pretences and preposterous fictions to pass, for proofs of monarchical principles and treasonable designs in the pure and patriotic bosoms of the sages and heroes of the revolution, it will so far recover its tone and shake off its disposition to be duped, as not to suffer itself to be insulted by the miserable sophistries which have so long been current, (in the language of Washington,) “to explain away the constitution.” It is to bring about the latter result which is really important. For, as to those “Solomons in council and Samsons in the field,” who have deserved so much gratitude, and been paid with so much reproach, their misfortunes and persecutions will only serve to enrich the story of their lives, when they shall become the subjects of faithful history and the theme of epic song. These will furnish an *Odyssey* of woes and wanderings to the *Iliad* of their revolutionary wars.

“But if on life’s uncertain main  
Mishap shall mar thy sail,  
If faithful, wise and brave, in vain,  
Woe, want and exile thou sustain  
Beneath the fickle gale,  
Spend not a sigh on fortune changed.”—

These lines are singularly descriptive of the fate of many of them, and of the temper with which they bore it. And if they would find, in the bright portions of their lives, compensation for the dark ones; and in the nobleness of their natures, support against the cruelty of their fortunes, it is not for us, who love them, to deprecate the latter, which was necessary to the full development of the former. For if, according to what Lord Bacon calls that “high speech of Seneca, after the manner of the stoics,” the good things of prosperity be merely desirable, while those of adversity are admirable, it is better for the dead, whose heritage is fame, to have achieved the latter. And we are taught by their example, instead of murmuring at their misfortunes, to turn them into blessings, by making them the means of lifting our meditations to those high and halcyon places of thought and sentiment which are above the storms of the world.

But I have digressed from the purpose of this Introduction, which was designed to be merely an appropriate vestibule to the theatre of controversy which the reader is now to enter. That it was forced upon the sons of General Lee, I have heard nobody deny, though some have deprecated the acrimony with which it was conducted by the author of this work. His reply to such objections was, that as the provocation was *infinite*, his severity could not be *excessive*. Whoever shall make the experiment, will find that it is not easy to feel deeply and write calmly; nor is it a wholesome state of public sentiment or taste which demands a suppression of indignation upon occasions which ought to excite it. To regret the cause of this controversy and some of its effects was permitted to the friends and family of General Lee; and is as becomingly expressed in the following pages, as I know it was sincerely felt by their author, and is now entertained by their editor. But I hope there is nothing in this work which will incur the deliberate censure of those whom experience of like injuries, or reflection upon them, has taught how to appreciate the feelings of a son at witnessing an unprovoked outrage upon the memory of his father; but that they will rather receive it with that acclaim, which I know it was hailed with by some, whom similar inflictions made companions in our sufferings.

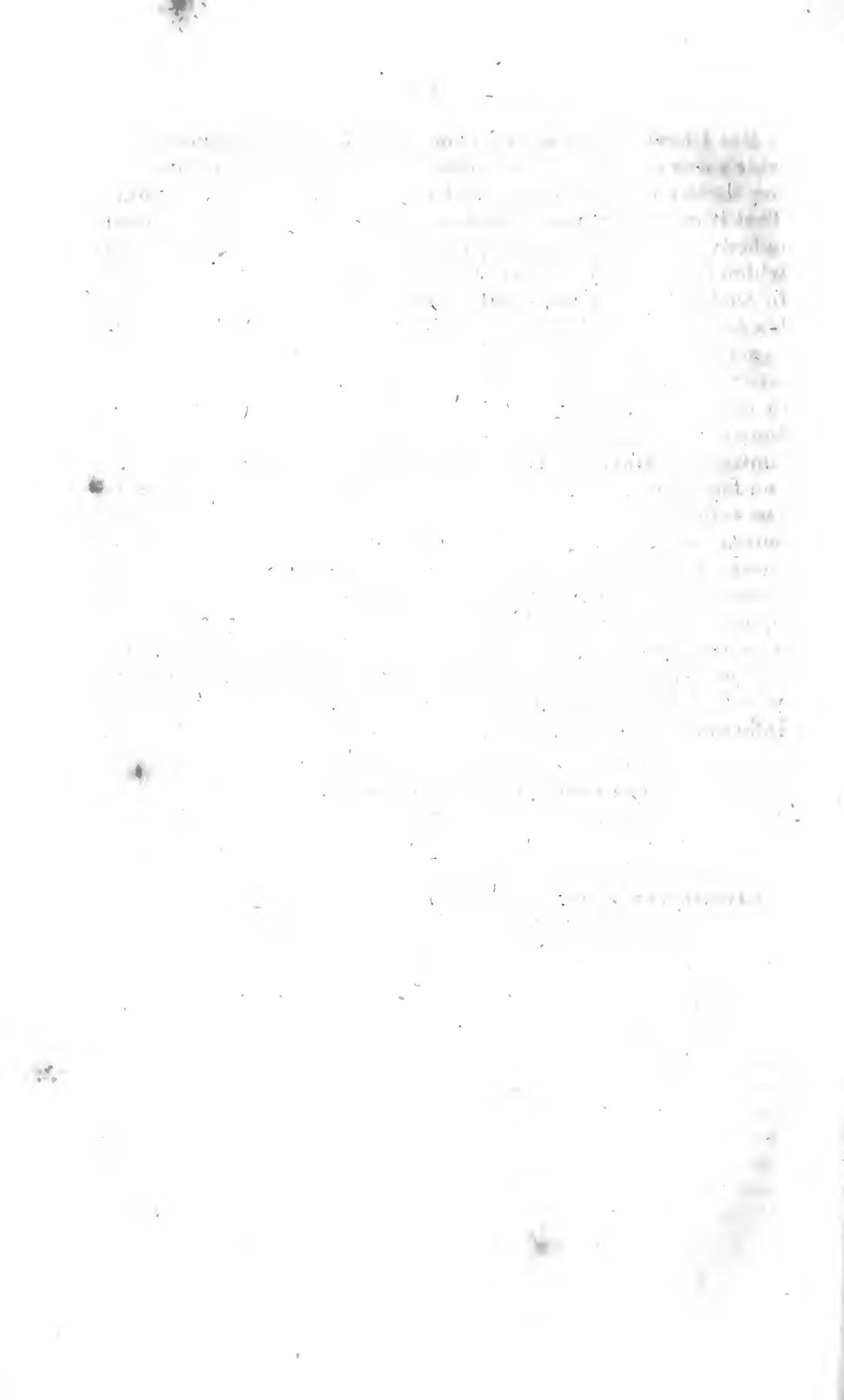
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“*Socii magno clamore sequuntur  
Dum genitor nati parma protectus abiret.*”

From his companions loud the clamour rose,  
As shielded by the son the father goes.

RAVENSWORTH, FAIRFAX COUNTY, V.A.

April 27th, 1839.



# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

## WRITINGS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

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### LETTER I.

I HAVE read, my dear sir, with great regret, in Jefferson's "Writings" (v. 3, p. 330,) the following letter from that gentleman to General Washington; which contains, as I conceive, a gross and unprovoked slander on the character of my father, and which, as I design to make it the subject of examination, is transcribed here without alteration or curtailment.

TO THE PRESIDENT.

*Monticello, June 19th, 1796.*

"In Bache's Aurora of the 9th instant, which came here by the last post, a paper appears which having been confided, as I presume, to but few hands, makes it truly wonderful how it should have got there. I cannot be satisfied as to my own part, till I relieve my mind by declaring, and I attest every thing sacred and honourable to the declaration, that it has got there neither through me nor the paper confided to me. This has never been from under my own lock and key, or out of my own hands; no mortal ever knew from me that these questions had been proposed. Perhaps I ought to except one person, who possesses all my confidence, as he has possessed yours. I do not remember indeed that I communicated it even to him. But as I was in the habit of unlimited trust and counsel with him, it is possible I may have read it to him, no more: for the quire of which it makes a part was never in any hand but my own, nor was a word ever copied or taken down from it by any body. I take on myself without fear, any divulgation on his part. We both know him incapable of it. From myself then, or my paper,

this publication has never been derived. I have formerly mentioned to you, that from a very early period of my life, I had laid it down as a rule of conduct, never to write a word for the public papers. From this I have never departed in a single instance; and on a late occasion, when all the world seemed to be writing, besides a rigid adherence to my own rule, I can say with truth that not a line for the press was ever communicated to me by another, except a single petition referred for my correction; which I did not correct, however, though the contrary, as I have heard, was said in a public place—by one person through error, through malice by another. I learn that this last has thought it worth his while to try to sow tares between you and me, by representing me as still engaged in the bustle of politics, and in turbulence and intrigue against the government. I never believed for a moment that this could make any impression on you, or that your knowledge of me would not outweigh the slander of an intriguer, dirtily employed in sifting the conversations of my table, where alone he could hear of me; and seeking to atone for sins against you by sins against another who had never done him any other injury than that of declining his confidences. Political conversations I really dislike, and therefore avoid where I can without affectation. But when urged by others I have never conceived that my having been in public life requires me to belie my sentiments, or even to conceal them. When I am led by conversation to express them, I do it with the same independence here which I have practised everywhere, and which is inseparable from my nature. But enough of this miserable tergiversator, who ought indeed either to have been of more truth, or less trusted by his country.\*

While on the subject of papers, permit me to ask one from you. You remember the difference of opinion between Hamilton and Knox on the one part, and myself on the other, on the subject of firing on the little Sarah, and that we had exchanged opinions and reasons in writing. On your arrival in Philadelphia, I delivered you a copy of my reasons, in the presence of Col. Hamilton. On our withdrawing he told me he had been so much engaged that he had not been able to prepare a copy of his and Gen. Knox's for you, and that if I would send you the one he had given me, he would replace it in a few days. I immediately sent it to you, wishing you should see both sides of the subject together—I often after applied to both the gentlemen, but could never obtain another copy—I have often thought of asking this one, or a copy of it, back from you, but have not before written on subjects of this kind to you. Though I do not know that it will ever be of the least importance to me, yet one loves to possess arms, though they hope never to have occasion for them. They possess my paper in my own hand-

\* Note by the Editor. "(Here in the margin of the copy, is written, apparently at a later date, 'Gen. H. Lee.'")

writing. It is just I should possess theirs. The only thing amiss is that they should have left me to seek a return of the paper, or a copy of it from you.

I put away this disgusting dish of old fragments, and talk to you of my peas and clover. As to the latter article, I have great encouragement from the friendly nature of our soil. I think I have had, both the last and present year, as good clover from common grounds, which had brought several crops of wheat and corn without ever having been manured, as I ever saw on the lots around Philadelphia. I verily believe that a field of thirty-four acres, sowed on wheat, April was twelvemonth, has given me a ton to the acre at its first cutting this spring. The stalks extended, measured three and a half feet long, very commonly—another field, a year older, and which yielded as well the last year, has sensibly fallen off this year. My exhausted fields bring a clover not high enough for hay, but I hope to make seed from it. Such as these, however, I shall hereafter put into peas in the broadcast, proposing that one of my sowings of wheat shall be after two years of clover, and the other after two years of peas. I am trying the white boiling pea of Europe (the Albany pea) this year, till I can get the hog pea of England, which is the most productive pea of all. But the true winter vetch is what we want extremely. I have tried this year the Caroline drill. It is absolutely perfect. Nothing can be more simple, nor perform its office more perfectly for a single row. I shall try to make one to sow four rows at a time of wheat or peas, at twelve inches distance. I have one of the Scotch threshing machines nearly finished. It is copied exactly from a model Mr. Pinckney sent me, only that I have put the whole works (except the horse wheel,) into a single frame, moveable from one field to another on the two axles of a wagon. It will be ready in time for the harvest which is coming on, which will give it a full trial. Our wheat and rye are generally fine, and the prices talked of bid fair to indemnify us for the poor crops of the two last years.

I take the liberty of putting under your cover a letter to the son of the Marquis de la Fayette, not exactly knowing where to direct to him.

With very affectionate compliments to Mrs. Washington, I have the honour to be, with great and sincere esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

TH. JEFFERSON."

The respect which in common with a great majority of my countrymen, I was induced to entertain for the character of Mr. Jefferson, is now a double source of regret to me, as it enhances the duty of defending my father's memory and aggravates the pain of performing it. To add to this chagrin comes the reflection, that I may occasion to the feelings of Mr. Jefferson's relatives, a violence not unlike that under which my own are suffering—a violence to which

I am forced at the sacrifice of long-cherished veneration, and which they can forgive only at the expense of a sacred affection. A shock of surprise has increased this accumulated mortification. That General Lee was politically opposed to Mr. Jefferson, I was well aware; but that personal rancour existed on either side, I had not the least suspicion. The zeal of the former you will attest, was too polished and well-tempered, to carry on its edge the taint of abuse or the poison of slander. Careless of political preferment himself, he could well endure the elevation of others. And as in the party warfare that divided the nation Mr. Jefferson was a more successful combatant, I supposed he had been at least as tolerant an adversary.

Other considerations strengthened this impression. They had both been labourers in a great and successful national struggle. They were the common friends of many eminent citizens—such as Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe. In a controversy most painful to Mr. Jefferson's feelings, he had been indebted to the delicacy, forbearance, and liberality of Gen. Lee.\* How then could I be prepared for this surviving virulence, this testamentary hatred on his part?

Before I examine its intrinsic value, it will be well to sketch its external history—as the account of a man's life is often prefaced by a description of his person.

It cannot fail to be observed that while expressing this violent abuse of Gen. Lee, in terms so flagrantly unsuitable to the dignity of his correspondent, he took care to suppress the mention of his name; thus attempting an injury, and withholding at the same time all means of its redress. It was hardly possible that Gen. Washington should repeat such vague and scurrilous language—and as little so, if he did, that Gen. Lee should take to himself its application. "At a later date," we are told, in an hour dedicated to the joys of secret malevolence, Mr. Jefferson fixed this floating defamation on Gen. Lee; and at a date still later, when death had struck with his tremendous dart the subject of this slander, and overwhelmed with pious grief his descendants, bequeathed it to posterity, as a lasting outrage to their affection, and a public stigma on his name.<sup>†</sup>

Thus the resentment of this philosopher and statesman was appeased, neither by the fellowship of patriotism, the remembrance of kindness, the lapse of time, nor the solemnity of death. Exhibited to the world on the summit of his lofty fame, it is beheld in three stages of progression, and in as many shades of intensity. It first appears a torrent of impetuous passion. It next darkens into a stream of solitary and determined malice. And thence descending it stops, cold with hatred, and hardened by inveteracy, on the

\* For the truth of this assertion I appeal *confidently* to Mr. Madison.

† Gen. Lee died in March, 1818, eight years before Mr. Jefferson and eleven before this slander appeared.

modest honours, and the silent sorrows that dwell around a patriot soldier's grave.

As the terms of the offensive passage in question, notwithstanding the greatness of their authority, are as vague as they are indelicate; present to the mind nothing but a tissue of hearsay averments and malignant insinuations, it will be expedient to unfold their confusion, and to submit to a fair and careful scrutiny whatever statements as to fact or character can be extracted from them.

One of these is that Gen. Lee, in order to convey improper information to Gen. Washington, had "dirtily intrigued, and had sifted the conversations of Mr. Jefferson's table, where alone he could hear of him" to obtain materials for his communications. Dismissing for a moment the contempt this unworthy accusation inspires, let me ask, may it not be as justly retorted on Mr. Jefferson as directed against Gen. Lee? How did he learn the subject of Gen. Lee's communications either verbal or written to Gen. Washington? Was it not as necessary that for this purpose he should "dirtily intrigue and sift table conversations" as that Gen. Lee should? Was it not even more so? Gen. Washington having been a more important personage than Mr. Jefferson, and Mr. Jefferson than Gen. Lee, it results from the rule of proportion, that remarks made by Mr. Jefferson respecting Gen. Washington, would more probably be absorbed into a degree of circulation, than any Gen. Lee could make concerning Mr. Jefferson. Besides it will be seen that Mr. Jefferson's hostility to Gen. Washington was too eager in its spirit and (although he says he could only be heard of at table conversations) too indiscriminate in its expression to require either industry or intrigue on the part of his friends, to discover it, and too directly injurious to Gen. Lee himself to allow him to be indifferent to it.

In the order of collocation, the first allegation of Mr. Jefferson is, that Gen. Lee and another person said at a public place that a certain petition had been corrected by Mr. Jefferson, and he asserts conclusively, that while the other person had made this statement through *error*, Gen. Lee made it from *malice*. Taking for granted the truth of this hearsay affirmation, the admissions of Mr. Jefferson himself show that a less uncharitable conclusion would have been a more logical one. He says the petition was referred to him for correction, but takes care to add "which, however, I did not correct—" thus evincing a lively apprehension that the fact of the reference would naturally lead to the very conclusion which Gen. Lee is reproached with having drawn. Apprized of the reference of the petition to Mr. Jefferson, and satisfied of his secret hostility to Gen. Washington, Gen. Lee, without the least malice or intent to slander, might believe and assert, that it had received his correction. There was less boldness in inferring the fact of correction against Mr. Jefferson than in imputing the motive of malice to Gen. Lee. Indeed the probability is that Gen. Lee was only

repeating the assertion of some other person, in whose truth and judgment he confided, as his residence was remote from that of Mr. Jefferson. And it is equally probable, (though the remark does not properly belong to this stage of the observations) that as the petition was intended to militate against the popularity and the administration of the President, Mr. Jefferson's *not* correcting it—suffering it to go forth with all its invective and mis-statement to the public, was the most unfriendly position in regard to Gen. Washington that, on the occasion, he could have assumed.

These considerations show that he had no ground of reason to distinguish odiously between the assertion of Gen. Lee and that of the other "person;" and that the utmost impropriety of which Gen. Lee could be charged, was with having adopted a natural, but erroneous inference—or rather with having confided in information which, however probable, was not in fact true. Could this degree of credulity justify the gross invective and injurious imputations of Mr. Jefferson? Would it not have been more reasonable as well as more decorous to observe that Gen. Lee was mistaken, that he had been led into error? Allowing both that Mr. Jefferson did not correct the petition, and that Gen. Lee had asserted that he did, was he the first or the second man who committed a similar error, or who might not be charged with equal credulity? Adam Smith, whose authority is as high in the philosophy of morals as of politics, says, "the man scarce lives who is not more credulous than he ought to be, and who does not upon many occasions, give credit to tales, which not only turn out to be perfectly false, but which a very moderate degree of reflection and attention might have taught him, could not very well be true."\* This citation is not required to prove the innocence of Gen. Lee, but may help to manifest the injustice of Mr. Jefferson.

I do not mean to question the fact of which Mr. Jefferson next complains, viz: Gen. Lee's having advised Gen. Washington, that while he was confiding in Mr. Jefferson's apparent friendship the latter was engaged in disseminating misrepresentations of his public character, in instigating opposition to his measures, and exciting distrust of his intentions—so far from it, to use the slang of an at-

[\* If one's own imperfections should make him tolerant of those of others, no one ought to have forgiven credulity more readily than Mr. Jefferson. His belief "that one thousand miles up the Missouri there was a salt mountain, 80 miles long and 45 wide, composed of solid rock salt, without any trees or even shrubs upon it," is mentioned by Mr. Tucker (Vol. II. p. 160,) as having long furnished a subject of ridicule. At page 43 of the volume just cited, a more objectionable instance of his credulity is quoted, and indeed so gross as to draw from Mr. Tucker the admission, "that if Mr. Jefferson experienced the most virulent hatred, and the most unfounded calumny of his adversaries, he was not far behind them in credulity and injustice, and that he did not hesitate to attribute to them purposes which no honest mind could form, and no rational mind would attempt." This is much for a partial biographer to admit; but the reader of Mr. Jefferson's lines will be inclined to think that he was somewhat ahead of his adversaries both in credulity and injustice.]

torney, I admit the charge and plead the truth in justification of it. This I am led to do, less from a disposition to confide in the statements of Mr. Jefferson, than from an assurance that Gen. Lee would never see with indifference the father of his country and his own friend made the sport of insincere professions and the victim of dishonest practices. And with a view of reducing this charge to terms more definite than its author has thought fit to employ, I refer you to an extract of Gen. Washington's reply to this letter of Mr. Jefferson as it is found in Marshall.

"If I had entertained any suspicion before, that the queries which have been published in Bache's paper proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary would have removed them—but the truth is, I harboured none. I am at no loss to conjecture from what source they flowed, through what channel they were conveyed, nor for what purpose they and similar publications appear.—As you have mentioned\* the subject yourself, it would not be frank, candid, or friendly to conceal, that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I conceived you entertained of me; that to your particular friends and connexions you have described, and they have denounced me, as a person under a dangerous influence, and that, if I would listen *more* to some *other* opinions, all would be well. My answer invariably has been, that I had never discovered any thing in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to raise suspicions in my mind of his sincerity; that if he would retrace my public conduct while he was in the administration, abundant proofs would occur to him that truth and right decisions were the *sole* objects of my pursuit: that there were as many instances within his *own* knowledge of my having decided against as in *favour* of the person evidently alluded to: and moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no party man myself, and that the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them. To this I may add, and very truly, that until the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would, or even could go the lengths I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability—hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth; and wished by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most invidious misrepresentations of

\* Vol. V. p. 674. Here Marshall, who does not quote the letter of Mr. Jefferson, says—"In the same letter" (that is the letter of the 19th June, 1796, abusing Gen. Lee,) "Mr. Jefferson had stated his total abstraction from party questions."

them be made, by giving one side only of the subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, to a notorious defaulter—or even to a common pick-pocket. But enough of this—I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended.”

The point thus arising for inquiry, being made by the question whether Gen. Lee’s communications to Gen. Washington were true or false, it is obviously necessary antecedently to determine what they were. Mr. Jefferson neither specifies his acts nor repeats his language. He asserts, on hearsay authority, that he “had tried to sow tares” between him and Gen. Washington “by representing him as still engaged in the bustle of politics, and in turbulence and intrigue against the government.” These expressions convey nothing like distinct information, and it is impossible to conceive that in warning Gen. Washington of the danger of confidence in Mr. Jefferson, Gen. Lee should not have expressed himself more specifically, should not have drawn the attention of Gen. Washington to instances in that gentleman’s practices or language. Accordingly, if we refer to Gen. Washington’s reply to this part of Mr. Jefferson’s letter, we shall discover with sufficient precision not only what Gen. Lee’s information was, but that it consisted of definite and substantial statements. In that letter it is observed: “As you have mentioned the subject yourself, it would not be frank, candid, or friendly, to conceal, that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I conceived you entertained of me; that to your particular friends and connexions you have described, and they have denounced me, as a person under a dangerous influence, and that if I would listen *more* to some other opinions all would be well.”

As no man since Mr. Jefferson’s death will doubt the truth of Gen. Washington’s solemn declarations upon matters of fact, it may be safely assumed that this was the substance of Gen. Lee’s information to him. He may be supposed to have said: “*I have good reason to believe that Mr. Jefferson’s conduct towards you does not correspond with his professions—that he represents you as, guided implicitly by the counsels of Hamilton, and thereby operated on by a dangerous bias in favour of Great Britain—and gives out that if you would listen more to some other opinions all would yet be well.*” Now although this is a fair version of Gen. Washington’s account of the information he received, I have no fear of proving that so far from overstepping the truth, it falls very far short of it.

In the mean time it will not be impertinent to remark the contrast between the clearness and sobriety of Gen. Lee’s communication,\* and the obscurity and intemperance of Mr. Jefferson’s

[\* To show these qualities more distinctly in, at least, the first communication on this subject from Gen. Lee to Gen. Washington, and the mild and proper spirit in which it was made, the reader’s attention is requested to the

reprobation of it. Without pretending to know or pausing to inquire what in reality had been alleged against him—which any one conscious of fair dealing would have done, for the purpose

following letter, extracted from Vol. X. p. 560, of "The Writings of Washington, by Sparks."

HENRY LEE TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

*Richmond, 17 August, 1794.*

My dear Sir—Your late orders for a detachment of militia, and your proclamation, give birth to a variety of sensations and opinions. All good citizens deplore the events, which have produced this conduct on your part, and feel but one determination to maintain inviolate our happy government at the risk of their lives and fortunes. There are some among us, from the influence of party spirit and from their own ambitious views, who rejoice in national adversity, and gladden when they hear of governmental embarrassments. I am gratified in telling you, that the great body of this State will exert themselves in whatever way you may direct, to the utmost of their power; and I am persuaded that you may count with certainty on their zeal and determination. The awful occasion demands united efforts, and I beg leave to offer to you my services in any way or station you may deem them proper.

When I saw you in Philadelphia, I had many conversations with you respecting Mr. Henry, and since my return I have talked very freely and confidentially with that gentleman. I plainly perceive, that he has credited some information, which he has received (from whom I know not), which induces him to believe that you consider him a factious, seditious character, and that you expressed yourself to this effect on your return from South Carolina, in your journey through this State, as well as elsewhere. Assured in my own mind, that his opinions are groundless, I have uniformly combated them, and lament that my endeavours have been unavailing. He seems to be deeply and sorely affected. It is very much to be regretted; for he is a man of positive virtue as well as of transcendent talents; and, were it not for his feelings above expressed, I verily believe he would be found among the most active supporters of your administration. Excuse me for mentioning this matter to you. I have long wished to do it, in the hope that it will lead to a refutation of the sentiments entertained by Mr. Henry.

A very respectable gentleman told me the other day, that he was at Mr. Jefferson's, and, among inquiries which he made of that gentleman, he asked, if it were possible that you had attached yourself to Great Britain, and if it could be true that you were governed by British influence, as was reported by many. He was answered in the following words: "That there was no danger of your being biassed by considerations of that sort, so long as you were influenced by the wise advisers, or advice, which you at present had." I requested him to reflect, and reconsider, and to repeat again the answer. He did so, and adhered to every word. Now, as the conversation astonished me, and is inexplicable to my mind, as well as derogatory to your character, I consider it would be unworthy in me to withhold the communication from you. To no other person will it ever be made.

Wishing you every happiness, I am yours, &c.

HENRY LEE.

General Washington's reply will be found at page 428 of the volume just cited, from which it will be necessary to insert only the following paragraph.

"With respect to the words said to have been uttered by Mr. Jefferson, they would be enigmatical to those who are acquainted with the characters about me, unless supposed to be spoken ironically; and in that case they are too injurious to me, and have too little foundation in truth to be ascribed to him. There could not be the trace of doubt on his mind of predilection in mine

of admitting it if true, or denying it if false—he denounces it *en masse* as a contemptible slander; boldly appeals to the unsuspecting temper of the General in contradiction of it; ridicules and vilifies, without mentioning his name, the character of its author; thus anxiously endeavouring, by covering his statements with discredit, to conceal them from examination: with one hand casting filth on the reputation of Gen. Lee, and throwing dust with the other in the eyes of Gen. Washington.

With this spiteful impatience at the approach of truth, the tumult and licentiousness of his language, which, considering his own eminence, the standing of Gen. Lee, and the character of Gen. Washington—must excite the surprise of every reader—exactly correspond. Applying to it that process of reasoning by which moral effects are traced to their causes, you will find, that instead of proving a sense of injustice, it betrays an apprehension of injury—a consciousness that *any* disclosures of his conduct leading to an investigation of his proceedings in this respect, might expose him to the reproaches and indignation of Gen. Washington; whose open denunciation at that time, he knew would be fatal to his popularity, and whose wrath he feelingly declares (Vol. V. p. 236,) when once aroused, was “most tremendous.”

Nor are these distrustful impressions with regard to this passage, weakened by a closer analysis of its terms. He alleges that Gen. Lee “had tried to sow tares between him and Gen. Washington by representing him as still engaged in the bustle of politics and in turbulence and intrigue against the government.” The phrase “to sow tares” is a scriptural one, and in order to measure its meaning here, it must be compared with its original employment. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, xiii. 24, our Saviour thus expresses himself—“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and *sowed tares* among the wheat, and went his way.” Mr. Jefferson intended therefore to convey this proposition to Gen. Washington’s mind. *While sentiments of mutual confidence and respect subsisted between us, pure as the good seed which a man sows in his field; Gen. Lee, a secret enemy to me if not to you, came and endeavoured to destroy it by false and malicious aspersions, which are as noxious and as unworthy of your attention as the tares that spring up in wheat are of the husbandman’s care.*

The next phrase is unfortunate in saying that Gen. Lee repre-

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towards Great Britain or her politics, unless, which I do not believe, he has set me down as one of the most deceitful and uncandid men living; because, not only in private conversations between ourselves on this subject, but in many meetings with the confidential servants of the public, he has heard me often, when occasions presented themselves, express very different sentiments, with an energy that could not be mistaken by any one present.”

Yet it will appear in the sequel that Mr. Jefferson did habitually charge Gen. Washington with British predilections; with how little foundation is evident from his generous disbelief of such conduct.]

sented him as engaged in "the bustle of politics,"—for that is the very reverse of what Gen. Lee did say, and of what will be proved to have been the fact. Gen. Lee said his misrepresentations were addressed to his "particular friends and connexions"—were *secret*, and therefore the more dangerous and the more detestable. Had he been engaged in the "*bustle of politics*," there would have been neither room for his concealment, nor need for Gen. Lee's intelligence. The expression too, "engaged in turbulence and intrigue against the government,"—betrays equal inattention to facts, and the same aversion that has been already noticed to a candid explanation of his conduct. It is impossible to conceive that a person could be at once turbulent and intriguing in his opposition. It would be as rational to affirm that he was at the same time loud and silent—or active and still—or honest and dishonest. Gen. Lee could have had no cause to fall into such confusion of thought, or to employ such absurdity of language. And Mr. Jefferson in doing so shows that he was more intent upon purposes of resentment and fraud than upon the dictates of truth and reason. The entire passage is indeed a striking example of one of those "miscarriages"—to which a favourite author of Mr. Jefferson, Locke, says the mind is subject, when under the influence of improper motives. "And these, one may observe, commonly content themselves with words which have no distinct ideas to them, though in other matters that they come with an unbiassed indifference to, they want not abilities to talk and hear reason,\* &c."

With respect to the question, *whether the intelligence thus admitted to have been communicated by Gen. Lee to Gen. Washington, was true or false*; it is evident that its decision must have a very different effect upon the antagonist reputations of Mr. Jefferson and Gen. Lee. Were it made to appear that Mr. Jefferson never did "describe Gen. Washington to his particular friends and connexions as a person under a dangerous influence," as too much guided by the counsels of Hamilton, and subject thereby to an improper bias in favour of Great Britain, it would by no means follow that Gen. Lee was guilty of untruth or was wanting in veracity. He would still be entitled to the benefit of his general character in support of the integrity of his motives, and of the justice of limiting the decision against him to the venial fact, of having repeated what was false because he believed it to be true. On the other hand, should it be demonstrated that his information respecting the late prime minister and still avowed friend of Gen. Washington, was true—that Mr. Jefferson, while denouncing it to him as "the slander of a dirty intriguer," while amusing him by the show of esteem and friendship, by professing a refined aversion to politics, and an exclusive devotion to rural labours and the charms of philosophy; was actually employed and had been busily

\* *Essay on the Conduct of the Understanding.* Sec. 3.

engaged, from a period not long subsequent to his retirement from the office of Secretary of State, in disparaging his public character, and misrepresenting his official measures; in endeavouring throughout the circle of his prominent acquaintances by the artful adaptation of suitable excitements to dissipate confidence, to stimulate hostility, to exasperate discontent, and to provoke suspicion, wherever these dispositions towards his administration appeared or were suspected; a deliberate falsehood must be proved against Mr. Jefferson, attended by the aggravating circumstances of injustice to Gen. Lee, and hypocrisy and ingratitude to Gen. Washington.

As this is to be the alternative issue of the question—as on one side, it cannot dishonour the name of Gen. Lee, and on the other may bring a stain on the memory of Mr. Jefferson, I may be supposed to approach it with less diffidence as a son than as a citizen. To withdraw myself from among the admirers of this distinguished man, and take a station in the ranks of those who doubt the justice of his popularity, and the solidity of his fame, is a change of position, which however just and necessary, you may suppose to be inconvenient, as little desired as premeditated, one which I am forced to by causes that place me in a defensive attitude, which you must admit are imperative, and which so far from being of my creation, owe their unwelcome existence to the pertinacious volition and injurious spirit of Mr. Jefferson himself.

In conducting the controversy thus imposed on me, it will occur to your reflection, that it is both my right and my duty, as the representative of my father, to assume that line of defence and to employ those means of vindication, which he himself, if living, would have been entitled to adopt. It will likewise appear that inasmuch as the passage, in which Mr. Jefferson traduced and reproached him, contains both a contradiction of his assertions and an attack upon his character, he might, without transgressing the limits of moderation or indulging feelings of revenge, have endeavoured to establish from circumstances in Mr. Jefferson's conduct, the truth of his own assertions, and the absence of that virtue in the imputations of his adversary. This course of proceeding, it is farther evident, will lead to the examination of the sincerity of Mr. Jefferson's professions as a friend to Gen. Washington, the soundness of his pretensions as an enlightened patriot, and the justice of his reputation as an upright statesman—to the inquiry whether his reasonings were logical, his opinions just, his statements true, or his motives honourable. This operation will naturally be the more exigent and rigorous from the lofty manner in which the volumes that contain his slander of Gen. Lee are given to the world, as displaying “genius, learning, philosophic inspiration, generous devotion to virtue, and love of country,”—which having a tendency to give weight to his attack, justly exposes him

to the full effect of the *lex talionis*, the law of moral re-action as applied to that offence.

From the stations he filled, the affairs with which he was conversant, the important measures he directed, and the high reputation he acquired, the task thus proposed is by no means a light one; suitable rather to the patient and ambitious labours of a historian, than to the unpretending and reluctant essay of an advocate.

Yet all unequal and unprepared as I am for its full accomplishment, I feel conscious of no apprehension that as far as the object of my father's vindication is involved, I shall fail in effecting it.

In order to prove that his information to Gen. Washington was not only true, but such as was to be expected from a faithful friend and a man of honour, it will only be necessary to refer to the "Writings" of Mr. Jefferson. Happily they contain the antidote to their own poison. From them it appears that upon Gen. Washington's first election to the Presidency, he selected Mr. Jefferson for the chief office of his Cabinet; a distinction, the honour of which was enhanced by expressions of the greatest kindness. On that occasion, he thus wrote to Mr. Jefferson, Vol. I. p. 144.)

"New York, October 13th, 1789.

"Sir,—In the selection of characters to fill the important offices of government in the United States, I was naturally led to contemplate the talents and dispositions I knew you to possess, and entertain for the service of your country; and without being able to consult your inclinations, or to derive any knowledge of your intention from your letters, either to myself or to any other of your friends, I was determined, as well by motives of private regard, as a conviction of public propriety, to nominate you for the department of state."

If the language of this letter breathes confidence and regard, that in which it was answered was not less expressive of courtly homage, and of personal respect and attachment. After deprecating the disproportion between the duties of the office and his own qualifications, he tells the President, (Vol. III. p. 46,) "My chief comfort will be to work under your eye, my only shelter the authority of your name, and the wisdom of measures to be dictated by you, and implicitly executed by me. As early as possible in March, I shall have the honour of waiting on you in New York. In the mean time, I have that of tendering you the homage of those sentiments of respectful attachment with which I am," &c. &c.

Thus covered with the mantle of honour and office, and glowing with the blushes of modesty and gratitude, Mr. Jefferson entered the department of State, in March, 1790; and having discharged its duties with more than common ability until December 1793, voluntarily retired from it, against the earnest and repeated instances of Gen. Washington. The force of these, it is said, he was able to resist, principally by motives arising out of a decided

preference for the "pursuits of private life," (Vol. IV. p. 469,) and an "excessive repugnance to public life," (p. 492,) motives which were so strong and steady, that although the President complained (p. 492,) of being "deserted by those on whose aid he had counted," and entreated (p. 494,) that he "would only stay in till the end of another quarter," the philosophic and eremitical secretary, disgusted with "the bustle of politics," and impatient of the trammels of office, could not give his consent.\*

From his own account it seems (pp. 484, 501,) that throughout this period he enjoyed in an equal degree with Hamilton the confidence and favour of the President, that he was consulted as to the selection of his successor, (p. 493,) that for that station, Mr. Madison was the President's first choice, but he had expressed himself too averse to public office, to admit a hope of his accepting it; and that although this official separation took place, Mr. Jefferson carried with him into retirement the same high opinion of "his talents and disposition to serve his country," and the same degree of "private regard" and public confidence, which had prompted Gen. Washington to appoint him.

How were these sentiments of unabated friendship, of confiding attachment returned? In December, 1794, a single twelvemonth after his resignation, at a time when no decrease of regard or esteem had taken place, or been suspected on the part of Gen. Washington—when the father of his country, as he had told the secretary (Vol. IV. p. 492,) had a right to count on his aid, had a right to expect not only his public, but his personal support, his encouragement in the prosecution of right measures, his advice when in danger of adopting wrong ones; a just, if not a favourable view of his motives, and a fair, if not an indulgent account of his mistakes, Mr. Jefferson, after writing to the President in May, 1794, (Vol. III. p. 306,) "but I cherish tranquillity too much to suffer political things to enter my mind at all;" and to the Secretary of State, his successor, in September of the same year, "It is a great pleasure to me to retain the esteem and approbation of the President, and this forms the only ground of any reluctance at being unable to comply with every wish of his. Pray convey these sentiments and a thousand more to him which my situation does not permit me to go into," took occasion to make the following remarks in a letter to Mr. Madison.

"The denunciation of the Democratic Societies is one of the extraordinary acts of boldness of which we have seen so many from the faction of monocrats. It is wonderful indeed, that the President should have permitted himself to be the organ of such an attack on the freedom of discussion, the freedom of writing, print-

[\* There is a slight inaccuracy here. Though Mr. Jefferson did not consent, at the interview referred to in the text, to remain in office until the end of the year, he relented upon further reflection, and actually served until that time.]

ing and publishing. It must be a matter of rare curiosity to get at the modifications of these rights proposed by them, and to see what line their ingenuity would draw, between democratical societies whose avowed object is the nourishment of the republican principles of our constitution, and the society of the Cincinnati, a *self-created* one; carving out for itself hereditary distinctions, lowering over our Constitution eternally, meeting together in all parts of the Union, periodically, with closed doors, accumulating a capital in their separate treasury, corresponding secretly, and regularly, and of which society, the very persons denouncing the democrats, are themselves the fathers, founders, and high officers. Their sight must be perfectly dazzled by the glittering of crowns and coronets, not to see the extravagance of the proposition to suppress the friends of general freedom, while those who wish to confine that freedom to the few, are permitted to go on in their principles and practices. I here put out of sight the persons whose misbehaviour has been taken advantage of, to slander the friends of popular rights; and I am happy to observe, that as far as the circle of my observation and information extends, every body has lost sight of them, and views the abstract attempt on their natural and constitutional rights in all its nakedness. I have never heard, or heard of, a single expression or opinion which did not condemn it as an inexcusable aggression. And with respect to the transactions against the excise law, it appears to me that you are all swept away in the torrent of governmental opinions, or that we do not know what those transactions have been. We know of none which, according to the definitions of the law, have been any thing more than riotous. There was indeed a meeting to consult about a separation. But to consult on a question does not amount to a determination of that question in the affirmative, still less to the acting on such a determination; but we shall see, I suppose, what the court lawyers, and courtly judges, and would-be ambassadors, will make of it. The excise law is an infernal one. The first error was to admit it by the constitution; the second, to act on that admission, the third and last will be, to make it the instrument of dismembering the union, and setting us all afloat to choose what part of it we will adhere to. The information of our militia returned from the westward, is uniform, that though the people there let them pass quietly, they were objects of their laughter, not of their fear; that one thousand men could have cut off their whole force in a thousand places in the Alleghany; that their detestation of the excise law is universal, and has now associated to it, a detestation of the government; and that separation, which, perhaps, was a very distant and problematical event, is now near and certain, and determined in the mind of every man. I expected to have seen some justification of arming one part of the society against another; of declaring a civil war the moment before the meeting of that body which has the sole right of declaring war; of

being so patient of the kicks and scoffs of our enemies, and rising at a feather against our friends; of adding a million to the public debt and deriding us with recommendations to pay it if we can, &c. &c. But the part of the speech that was to be taken as a justification of the armament, reminded me of parson Saunders' demonstration, why *minus* into *minus* makes *plus*. After a parcel of shreds of stuff from Æsop's Fables, and Tom Thumb, he jumps all at once into his *ergo*, *minus* multiplied into *minus* makes *plus*. Just so the fifteen thousand men enter after the fables in the speech. However, the time is coming when we shall fetch up the lee way of our vessel. The changes in your house,\* I see are going on for the better, and even the Augean herd over your heads are slowly purging off their impurities. Hold on then, my dear friend, that we may not shipwreck in the meanwhile. I do not see in the minds of those with whom I converse, a greater affliction than the fear of your retirement; but this must not be, unless to a more splendid and a more efficacious post. There I should rejoice to see you; I hope I may say, I shall rejoice to see you. I have long had much in my mind to say to you on that subject, but double delicacies have kept me silent. I ought perhaps to say, while I would not give up my own retirement for the empire of the universe, how I can justify wishing one whose happiness I have so much at heart as yours, to take the front of the battle which is fighting for my security. This would be easy enough to be done, but not at the heel of a lengthy epistle." Here occurs a hiatus, as if part of the letter was suppressed by the editor, and it concludes, "Present me respectfully to Mrs. Madison, and pray her to keep you where you are, for her own satisfaction and the public good, and accept," &c. &c.

To exhibit thoroughly the meaning of this letter; to take a chart of its misrepresentations; to sound the depths of its detraction, and point out the shallows of its duplicity; to mark the currents of injustice, the recesses of guile, and the points of self-interest with which it abounds, it will be necessary to recur to the political parties, which at the time it was written, prevailed in the United States. This shall be done in a letter by the next packet.

\* Mr. Madison was then a member of the House of Representatives, and Congress was then in session.

## LETTER II.

IN going back to the parties of 1794, you must be aware that in recalling old and intricate matters to your memory, instead of courting your attention by bold or novel subjects, I may well prove to be tedious where I earnestly labour to be brief. But this inconvenience, inherent in the nature of my undertaking, must be incurred in order to set in a suitable light the remarks I have to make upon this memorable letter to Mr. Madison. So the painter who portrays one of our naval victories, is obliged to detach his pencil from the principal objects, in order to labour on the reflecting concomitants, the waves, the clouds, and the sky.

These parties then took their origin, as may be supposed, in the nature of man and in the character of our institutions, and were modified in their progress by the policy of foreign states, by circumstances in our domestic situation, and by the complexion of individual ambition. In reference to their first cause, the war of the revolution having divided our principal citizens into men of the sword, and men of the pen, these, when it was concluded, retained the temper of mind and habits of thinking, with respect to public affairs, which the part they had respectively borne in its events, naturally engendered.

The military class, by whose swords and hardships the independence of the country had been established, had pursued that object with an ardour and constancy proportioned to its magnitude and difficulty. Through the long series of dangers which they braved, of obstacles they encountered, of vexations they submitted to, and privations they endured, sustained by the dignity of a sacred cause, and animated by the example of their immortal leader, their zeal grew more determined and their patriotism warmer; as the breath of the Olympic horses was said to take fire, and the chariot wheels to kindle, in proportion as they neared the goal. And these ardent patriots, indefatigable in the career of public duty, having finished the work of our national deliverance, pressed forward to the no less arduous task of confirming our civil liberty.

Their experience had taught them to regret that the patriotism and resources of the nation were not subjected to the management of a regular and efficient authority, and to apprehend that as soon as peace should have removed the necessities of war and the weight of military command, the union of the states would be broken into fragments, and the power of the nation reduced to insignificance. They were, therefore, the eager advocates of a firm confederation, and of a general government with powers sufficient to maintain the peace, and provide for the defence of the country, and to discharge

the various obligations at home and abroad, incident to the station in the sisterhood of nations, which America, the fairest and the youngest, had just assumed.

\* The men of the pen, on the contrary, were disposed to insist on the danger of any concession of power, either from the fund belonging to the States, or the mass inherent in the citizens. They looked with jealousy on military authority, and on the habits of command, with which those who had borne it were supposed to be impressed. They questioned the prudence of consulting about a stronger government, and of risking on the sea of debate any portion of that freedom we had just vindicated; and they doubted the force of those exigencies which were said to recommend a fundamental change of existing institutions.

As their labours, moreover, had been confined to closets of study and halls of deliberation, exempt from the danger and unattended by the glory of war, they were sensible of appearing before the public as vanquished competitors for fame, and unequal candidates for popularity. Towards the military men, therefore, they felt both the opposition of opinion, and the rivalship of interest—were inclined but dubiously to the creation of a federal government, and when its establishment was resolved on, advocates generally for the least possible delegation of power to it; a sentiment conformable to their general theory, and agreeable to the jealousy with which they regarded the probable ascendancy of their rivals.

Out of this salutary conflict of opinions and feelings, of doubt and conviction, amongst its framers, the federal constitution under which we have continued to flourish, arose—the offspring of anxious deliberation, of sharpened discussion, of various interests, of mutual concession, and of common necessity among the States, with features as dimly anticipated by its authors as those of her first-born infant by a mother's hopes.

“Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.”

An analysis of this instrument is not called for.—It will be sufficient to observe that besides the co-ordinate distribution of power into legislative, executive, and judicial departments, it contained an express division of it, into that undefined portion which was reserved by the several States, and their respective citizens, and that limited one which was delegated to the federal head—that it provided for its own amendment, and as far as human wisdom can reach, for its own perpetuity.

[\* Mr. Tucker, himself a man of the pen, mentions among the causes of resistance to the formation of the constitution, “a fear with some individuals that their personal consequence would be lessened, when the higher attributes of sovereignty should be transferred from the separate states to a national government. They seemed to feel the force of the remark made by James I. to induce his nobles to remain in the country in preference to coming to the metropolis, that on their estates they were like great ships in a river, while in London they were the same ships at sea.”—*Life of Jefferson, Vol. I. page 309.*]

The contrariety of sentiments that had attended its formation, followed upon every occasion of its interpretation, and in a short time after the commencement of its administration, differences in the construction of its provisions, as they were elicited by the discussion and execution of legislative measures, became matured into the consistency of organized parties. To confirm them, came opposing views of expediency and justice as to foreign relations, and domestic concerns—the influence of the French revolution—the effect of disputes with England—and the discordant interest of those who possessed, and of those who aspired to, power.

The denominations of these parties were as various as the stages they passed through, and were descriptive sometimes of their respective opinions, and at others expressive of the temper in which they had been invented and applied. Thus when they divided upon the adoption of the constitution, its supporters were called *federalists*, and its opposers *anti-federalists*.\* When they differed as to the propriety of maintaining neutrality between France and England, and of paying the national debt, those who defended these measures of Washington's administration were stigmatised as *Aristocrats*, while their antagonists were termed *Democrats*. Finally, to those who persevered in approving the principles on which Washington had conducted the government, was restored the appellation of *federalists*; while the party who hailed the rising popu-

[\* It shows how curiously and quickly party denominations are changed, to know that in the discussions of the convention which formed the constitution, "those who opposed the system were there considered and styled the *federal party*, those who advocated it, the *anti-federal*. See Luther Martin's Speech to the Legislature of Maryland, p. 42-3.

Indeed the reader of the only sketches of the debates of the convention which formed the constitution, which have yet appeared, (those furnished by Judge Yates,) will be surprised to find into what a struggle for power they resolved themselves. The large states were then the greatest enemies of state importance, and advocated the democratic principle, that numbers should give power. "Will a regard to *state* rights, (exclaimed Judge Wilson, of Pennsylvania. See Secret Debates, page 191,) justify the sacrifice of the rights of *men*? Weight and numbers form the only true principle—every other is local, confined, and imaginary." Nor was Mr. Madison behind this orator in zeal in the same cause. He says, (page 184,) "The states never possessed the essential rights of sovereignty. These were always vested in congress. Their voting as states in congress is no evidence of sovereignty. The state of Maryland voted by counties; did this make the counties sovereign? The states, at present, are only great corporations, having the power of making by-laws, and these are effectual only if they are not contradictory to the general confederation. The states ought to be placed under the control of the general government, at least as much so as they formerly were under the king and British parliament."

Mr. Gerry from Massachusetts, then the third state in importance, echoes these sentiments. He says, (page 188,) "It appears to me the states never were independent—they had only corporate rights. Confederations are a mongrel kind of government, and the world does not afford a precedent to go by. Aristocracy is the worst kind of government, and I would sooner submit to a monarchy. We must have a system that will execute itself."

The mongrel confederations here objected to were of the kind under which we live. The aristocracy reprobated, was the government which the smaller

larity of Mr. Jefferson as the probable means of rescuing our constitution from the hands of a faction intent on corrupting their principles and on introducing monarchy, called themselves *republicans*.

This classification, though good, as a general description, is liable of course to exceptions—which, however, are not at variance with its spirit. The temper, the interest, or the connexion of some among the non-combatant class, placed them either momentarily or permanently in the federal ranks. Thus Mr. Jay, who was personally attached to Gen. Washington, had been secretary of foreign affairs under the old confederation, where he felt in their full force, the dangers growing out of its insufficiency—and in the organization of the new government had been placed at the head of the judiciary—was a steady adherent of the federal party. Thus Patrick Henry, who had been their most formidable adversary in regard to the adoption of the constitution, gave his support to them in the administration of Gen. Washington, from a patriotic desire to have the government that had been agreed on, fairly and beneficially conducted. While Mr. Madison, who opposed in congress almost every important step which Gen. Washington took in administering the government, had been among the most zealous of those statesmen who assisted in its formation, in recommending it to the acceptance of the American people, and in vindicating it against the objections of Mr. Henry.

On the other hand—motives of feeling, calculations of advancement, idiosyncrasies of character, or accidental influences, led some of the military men to take their station in the opposite class. For example—Gen. Gates, who had failed in an attempt to supplant

states wished to establish, the distinguishing feature of which was to be, that equality of power which was enjoyed by the states under the articles of confederation. This claim of the few to an equality of power with the many was resisted as engraving an aristocratic principle upon our republican institutions, no matter what the pretence upon which it was sought to be established. Time, however, has changed all this. The *outs* wishing to be *ins* resorted to the state governments as levers to assist them in overthrowing the federal administration, and naturally enough strove to magnify the places they possessed. Then some of the large states, forgetting all they had urged in the convention, consented that they should loom but little larger than Rhode Island and Delaware on the great sea of federal affairs, that they might be big ships in their own rivers; and arrogating to themselves more exclusive republicanism, maintained those state rights which they formerly pronounced aristocratic, and were peculiarly indignant at as involving a sacrifice of the rights of men.

O pudor!  
O magna Carthago probrosis  
Altior Italiae ruinis!

But, alas! your political saint also claims his privilege, and asks with Sir Hudibras's Ralph,

"Is 't not ridiculous and nonsense,  
A saint should be a slave to conscience?"]

Gen. Washington as commander-in-chief, and whose disappointment was embittered by subsequent misfortunes, fell out of his natural position and became a partisan of Mr. Jefferson. Others, whose stations in their proper class, promised but a slow or doubtful promotion, went over to the democratic side from a hope that, as glow-worms shine in the dark, their modicum of military reputation would become distinguishable by a society in which none existed. Some yielded to the force of counsel, some to love of change, and some to sympathy with the wild movements of the French revolution. But the great body of the military class, the distinguished officers of the revolution, such as Hamilton, Lincoln, Knox, Wayne, Morgan, Williams, Lee, Howard, the Pinckneys, Pickering, Ogden, Davie, and Brooks, were the firm supporters of Gen. Washington. In short, it was enough to see a member of that class to set him down as a federalist.

Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson were abroad on diplomatic missions, when the constitution was framed and adopted, and the parties first took their ground. They both returned, however, shortly after—when in consequence of the political zeal and abilities which Mr. Adams had displayed in various important situations, together with his geographical position, he was honourably associated with Gen. Washington in the first election; and receiving the second number of votes, was chosen Vice President of the United States.

Mr. Jefferson, with similar claims—and a higher reputation for literary and scientific attainments, could not be overlooked—and enjoying the personal friendship of the President, as we have seen, was by him placed at the head of his cabinet. He was understood to be in favour of adopting a general government, but to have disapproved several important features in the system that had been devised; so that while the influence of his station and his general reputation, secured the respect of both parties, his opinions provoked the displeasure of neither. In this convenient neutrality he remained, co-operating, generally, in the measures of the President, and patronising dexterously the opposition to them,\* until, by concurring in the proposition to require Genet's recall, and writing an elaborate despatch in exposure of his insolence and folly, he found himself in danger of being identified decisively in political reputation with Gen. Washington's principal supporters, and of losing the harvest of popularity which he had secretly sown, and studiously cultivated in the discontents of the party opposed to him. He therefore withdrew from the cabinet, professing an irresistible impatience to sink for ever into profound retirement, and an irreversible determination to cultivate to the day of his

\* Mr. Madison was the leader of this opposition in congress, and Freneau, a clerk in Mr. Jefferson's department, the avowed editor of the Gazette that supported it.

death, "peas and philosophy;" extricating himself from the hostility likely to attend measures in the conception and execution of which he had participated, and resolved that if it did not fall with overwhelming violence on Gen. Washington and his friends, it should not be for want of his secret instigation. In this spirit was evidently written the letter which is now to be the subject of examination.\*

It first attacks the president for denouncing in his speech to congress—which had been delivered about a month previously—certain political clubs or associations, which, under the denomination of Democratic Societies, had set themselves up in various districts of the United States, for the avowed purpose of controlling the foreign policy of the government, of saving the people from the iniquity of their rulers, and keeping alive, by inflaming public opinion against the character and measures of General Washington, the spirit of liberty, which they represented to be fast decaying under the influence of his name and counsels.

Adopting for their model the revolutionary clubs of France, which were then engaged in their work of proscription and havoc—they appointed committees for the purpose of securing conformity of schemes, and concert of action. They reprobated the determination of the Executive to maintain a neutral position between France and England—as a base forfeiture of our obligation to repay by military assistance to the former, the military aid we had received from her in the war of the revolution; exhorted the people to disregard it, and encouraged generally, contempt for the federal government, and resistance to its laws. That *extraordinary* envoy, citizen Genet, a perfect conductor of the folly and violence of the blood-stained authorities whom he represented, relying on our remaining animosity against Great Britain, our corresponding gratitude to France, and our ultra-sympathy in favour of her apparent efforts for freedom, had endeavoured to force our government to depart from its wise neutrality, and to engage as an ally of France in the war with England.

In this attempt he proceeded to extremities of insolence and presumption, that are too numerous for narration, and almost too enormous for belief. His intemperance and errors are with dignity alluded to by Gen. Washington, in a message to congress, are summarily recorded by Marshall in that stage of his history to which they belong,† and are ably exposed by Mr. Jefferson himself in a despatch of the 16th of August, 1793, from the department of state, to our minister in France, soliciting his recall. From these authorities we learn that taking advantage of the feelings of our people, and the feebleness of our infant institutions—he conducted

[\* See how exactly Mr. Jefferson's position as here described accords with that assigned to him by Mr. Tucker, (Vol. I. pages 469–70,) where the inconsistency between his words and actions is likewise clearly portrayed.]

† Vol. V. pp. 409 and 79.

himself towards the government, as if the United States, instead of being an independent nation, was a dependency of France—that among other enormities he not only assumed but *exercised* the right of fitting out, arming, and equipping in our ports, privateers to cruise against the commerce of nations with whom we are at peace\*—of recruiting from among our citizens, seamen to navigate and fight them—of capturing within our waters, the vessels of friendly nations engaged in a peaceful commerce with ourselves—of condemning prizes so made by virtue of admiralty powers, vested by himself in the consuls of France residing in our ports—all this in open violation of our jurisdiction, contempt of our sovereignty, and in defiance of the express and repeated interdiction of our government, communicated through Mr. Jefferson himself.

In this course of irregularity and outrage, as Mr. Jefferson well knew, he had been aided and abetted by the democratic societies—whose most active members, for the honour of our native citizens, be it remembered, were renegado Irish and miscreant Frenchmen, whose evolutions were regulated by Genet, and whose dark spirit polluted and misled the generous enthusiasm of our own people.

In a letter of the 26th of August, 1793, addressed to Gen. Lee, and referring to his appointment as commander-in-chief of the western expedition, Gen. Washington thus speaks of these societies, “I consider this insurrection as the first *formidable* fruit of the democratic societies; brought forth I believe too prematurely for their own views, which may contribute to the annihilation of them. That these societies were instituted by the *artful* and *designing* members, (many of their body I have no doubt mean well, but know little of the *real* plan) primarily to sow the seeds of jealousy and distrust among the people, of the government, by destroying all confidence in the administration of it;—and that these doctrines have been budding ever since—is not new to any one who is acquainted with the characters of their leaders, and have (has) been attentive to their manœuvres. I early gave it as my opinion to the confidential characters around me, that if these societies were not counteracted, (not by prosecutions, the ready way to make them grow stronger) or did not fall into disesteem from the knowledge of their origin, and the views with which they had been instituted by their father Genet, for purposes well known to the government; they would shake the government to its foundation. Time and circumstances have confirmed me in this opinion, and I deeply regret the probable consequences, not as they will affect me personally, (for I have not long to act on this theatre, and sure I am that not a man among them can be more anxious to put me aside, than I am to sink into the profoundest retirement,) but because I see under popular and fascinating guises, the most diabolical attempts to destroy the best fabric of human government and happiness that has ever been presented to the acceptance of mankind.”†

\* England and Holland.

† Vol. IV. pp. 489–90.

An explanation of the means here alluded to as adapted to the purpose of extirpating the influence of these associations is to be found in Mr. Jefferson's diary of Cabinet Consultations, held on the 1st and 2nd of August, 1793. From this it appears that five propositions were submitted to the ministers of State. The first was that a full statement of Genet's conduct be communicated to our envoy in France, to be by him laid before the French government—agreed to unanimously. The second, that in that letter his recall be required—Mr. Jefferson preferring that it should be a desire delicately expressed, the other members in favour of a peremptory demand. Third, that Genet be sent off—proposed by the Secretary of war, but disagreed to by every other. Fourth, to write a letter to Genet the same in substance as that to our minister in France, and let him know we had applied for his recall. Mr. Jefferson was against this, *because he thought it would render Genet extremely active in his plans, and endanger confusion.* But he was overruled by the other three gentlemen and the president. Fifth, *that a publication of the whole correspondence, and a statement of the proceedings should be made by way of appeal to the people.* This Mr. Jefferson opposed upon two grounds; first, that it would work unpleasantly at home, *by increasing the vigour and importance of the democratic society,\* which he affirmed had for its object solely the approaching election of Governor of Pennsylvania, and if let alone, would die away after that was over—by making the President appear to be a partizan—by exposing him to the attacks of anonymous writers, and to a counter appeal which Genet would in all probability publish.* The second, that it would work unpleasantly abroad, *by indisposing the government of France, and gratifying her enemies.* He adds—"the President manifestly inclined to the appeal to the people."

From this diary it is evident that although these societies were just beginning their operations, were considered by the Secretary of State as having but a local object, and an ephemeral existence, and had then only been dangerous through their incipient, though admitted connexion with Genet, the President was earnestly in favour of *an extraordinary appeal to the nation at large*, for the purpose of counteracting their schemes and influence, and bringing them into disesteem, and that Mr. Jefferson when called on for his opinion, upon the honour of a man and a minister, dissuaded this measure solely upon the ground of *expediency*—never intimating a scruple on that of *principle*, or alleging that it would "make the President the organ of an attack on the freedom of discussion, the

\* The original and central society of which Mr. Jefferson here speaks, was established at Philadelphia, the seat of the general government, and in immediate connexion with Genet, the 30th May, 1793, about three weeks after Genet's arrival there, and two months before this conference. The affiliated and corresponding associations were subsequently organized in concert with it, in various cities and towns of the Union. See Marshall, Vol. V. p. 426.

freedom of writing, printing, and publishing"—or the instrument of a "faction of monocrats in an act of extraordinary boldness."

Yet afterwards when they had extended their ramifications throughout the Union, had perseveringly encouraged and justified the insolent proceedings of Genet—had stimulated the malecontents of western Pennsylvania into a violent and extending insurrection—then, when the President in *an ordinary communication to Congress*, relating its suppression, in alluding (as he was bound in truth and justice to do) to the causes which had excited it—said "let the people persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the constitution of the United States. And when in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences, and disregarding the unerring truth that those who rouse cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated, from ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government," then I say, Mr. Jefferson thought himself called on to raise his head from the pillow of philosophical tranquillity, and secretly to reprobate this part of the message to the leading member of Congress from the President's own state, and to the head of the opposition in that body, as a daring outrage on the liberty of speech and of the press, and the gross effusion of a monarchial spirit. Was this consistent with friendship, or honour, or patriotism, or justice, or truth? If he thought the President had committed an error, and chose to make it the subject of observation, he should as a friend have addressed his remarks at once to him; and if he apprehended that his measures were likely to produce mischief to the nation, unless instantly counteracted, as a good citizen and an honest man he should have appealed openly to the people.

The clubs, to preserve the influence and favour of which, he was thus sacrificing his honour as a friend, and his duty as a citizen, in the answer of the Senate to the President's speech, which as we have seen is the subject of Mr. Jefferson's mingled censure and ridicule, are noticed in the following terms—"Our anxiety, arising from the licentious and open resistance to the laws in the Western counties of Pennsylvania, has been increased by the proceedings of certain self-created societies relative to the laws and administration of the government; proceedings in our apprehension, founded in political error, calculated, if not intended, to disorganize our government, and which, by inspiring delusive hopes of support, have been instrumental in misleading our citizens in the scene of insurrection." A motion to the same effect was carried against the strenuous opposition of Mr. Madison, by 47 to 45 in the House of Representatives, though through his exertions the application of its censure was subsequently restrained to associa-

tions within the insurgent districts, by the casting vote of the speaker.

Although thus shielded by the friends of Mr. Jefferson, the democratic societies could not withstand the weight of Gen. Washington's disapprobation, supported as it was by the concurring reprehension of the legislative bodies. They languished under public disesteem, and struggled against popular execration, until the summer of 1796, when the overthrow of their prototypes in France and the downfall of Robespierre, put an end to their mischievous existence. Marshall, in relating the circumstances of their dissolution, observes, "not more certain is it that the boldest streams must disappear, if the fountains which fed them be emptied, than was the dissolution of the Democratic Societies of America, when the Jacobin Clubs were denounced by France."\*

As Mr. Jefferson proceeds to contrast these societies very favourably with that of the Cincinnati, which he reproaches with "carving out for itself hereditary distinctions, lowering over our Constitution eternally, meeting together in all parts of the Union periodically with closed doors, accumulating a capital in their separate treasury, corresponding secretly and regularly; and of which society," he adds, "the very persons denouncing the democrats, are themselves the fathers, founders, and high officers—" it will serve to show the sincerity and justice of the sentiments he was thus instilling through Mr. Madison into the public mind, if we refer to the account he gave of this same society of Cincinnati in the year 1786 to the author of an article on political and diplomatic economy in a French Encyclopedia.†

"Having been in America during the period in which this institution was formed, and being then in a situation which gave me opportunities of seeing it in all its stages, I may venture to give M. de Meusnier materials for a succinct history of its origin and establishment. I should write its history in the following form.

"When, on the close of that war, which established the independence of America, its army was about to be disbanded, the officers, who, during the course of it, had gone through the most trying scenes together, who, by mutual aids and good offices, had become dear to one another, felt with great apprehension of mind the approach of that moment, which was to separate them, never, perhaps, to meet again. They were from different states, and from distant parts of the same state. Hazard alone could therefore give them but rare and partial occasions of seeing each other. They were, of course, to abandon altogether, the hope of ever meeting again, or to devise some occasion which might bring them together. And why not come together on purpose at stated times? Would not the trouble of such a journey be greatly overpaid by the pleasure of seeing each other again, by the sweetest of all consolations, the talking over the scenes of difficulty and endearment

\* Vol. V. p. 602.

† Vol. I. p. 416, et. seq.

they had gone through? This, too, would enable them to know who of them should succeed in the world, who should be unsuccessful, and to open the purses of all to every labouring brother. This idea was too soothing not to be cherished in conversation. It was improved into that of a regular association, with an organized administration, with periodical meetings, general and particular, fixed contributions for those who should be in distress, and a badge, by which, not only those who had not had occasion to become personally known, should be able to recognise one another, but which should be worn by their descendants, to perpetuate among them the friendship which had bound their ancestors together.

"Gen. Washington was, at that moment, oppressed with the operation of disbanding an army which was not paid, and the difficulty of this operation was increased, by some two or three states having expressed sentiments, which did not indicate a sufficient attention to their payment. He was sometimes present when his officers were fashioning in their conversations, their newly proposed society. He saw the innocence of its origin, and foresaw no effects less innocent. He was at that time writing his valedictory letter to the states, which has been so deservedly applauded by the world. Far from thinking it a moment to multiply the causes of irritation, by thwarting a proposition which had absolutely no other basis but that of benevolence and friendship, he was rather satisfied to find himself aided in his difficulties by this new incident, which occupied, and at the same time, soothed, the minds of his officers. He thought too, that this institution would be one instrument the more, for strengthening the federal bond, and for promoting federal ideas. The institution was formed. They incorporated into it the officers of the French army and navy, by whose sides they had fought, and with whose aid they had finally prevailed."

After stating that Gen. Washington accepted the office of President of the society, (which he held until his death) and mentioning the opposition which its supposed tendency to divide the community into distinct orders, soon excited, he proceeds. (p. 418.)

"The uneasiness excited by this institution, had very early caught the notice of Gen. Washington. Still recollecting all the purity of the motives which gave it birth, he became sensible that it might produce political evils, which the warmth of those motives had masked. Add to this, that it was disapproved by the mass of citizens of the union. This alone, was reason strong enough in a country, where the will of the majority is the law, and ought to be the law. He saw that the objects of the institution were too light to be opposed to considerations as serious as these; and that it was become necessary to annihilate it absolutely. On this, therefore, he was decided. The first annual meeting at Philadelphia, was now at hand; he went to that, determined to exert all his influence for its suppression. He proposed it to his fellow officers, and urged it with all his powers. It met an opposition which was observed to cloud his face with an anxiety, that the most distressful scenes of

the war had scarcely ever produced. It was canvassed for several days, and at length it was no more a doubt what would be its ultimate fate. The order was on the point of receiving its annihilation, by the vote of a great majority of its members. In this moment, their envoy arrived from France, charged with letters from the French officers, accepting with cordiality the proposed badges of union, with solicitations from others, to be received into the order, and with notice that their respectable sovereign had been pleased to recognise it, and to permit his officers to wear its badges. The prospect was now changed. The question assumed a new form. After the offer made by them, and accepted by their friends, in what words could they clothe a proposition to retract it, which would not cover themselves with the reproaches of levity and ingratitude? which would not appear an insult to those whom they loved? Federal principles, popular discontent, were considerations, whose weight was known and felt by themselves. But would foreigners know and feel them equally? would they so far acknowledge their cogency, as to permit, without indignation, the Eagle and Ribbon to be torn from their breasts, by the very hands which had placed them there? The idea revolted the whole society. They found it necessary then, to preserve so much of their institution as might continue to support this foreign branch, while they should prune off every other, which would give offence to their fellow-citizens; thus sacrificing on each hand, to their friends, and to their country.

The society was to retain its existence, its name, its meetings, and its charitable funds; but these last were to be deposited with their respective legislatures. The order was to be no longer hereditary. The Eagle and Ribbon were indeed retained, because they were worn, and they wished them to be worn, by their friends in a country where they would not be objects of offence; but themselves never wore them. They laid them up in their bureaus, with the medals of American independence, with those of the trophies they had taken, and the battles they had won. But through all the United States, no officer is seen to offend the public eye with a display of this badge. These changes have tranquillized the American states. Their citizens feel too much interest in the reputation of their officers, and value too much whatever may serve to recall to the memory of their allies, the moments wherein they formed but one people, not to do justice to the circumstances which prevented the total annihilation of the order; and it would be an extreme affliction to them, if the domestic reformation which has been found necessary, if the censures of individual writers, or if any other circumstance, should discourage the wearing their badge by their allies, or lessen its reputation." He then adds, that the above is "a short and true history of the Order of the Cincinnati."\*

\* Soon after Meusnier's article on the Cincinnati was published, Mr. Jefferson enclosed it to Gen. Washington, (Vol. II. p. 63,) observing, "In a work

From this account then, we have the grave authority of Mr. Jefferson himself, for saying, that the Society of Cincinnati, was founded exclusively on sentiments of "benevolence and friendship," was "innocent in its origin," and as far as its members could foresee, "no less innocent in its effects," was considered likely to smooth the difficulties of disbanding the army, and to strengthen the tendencies to union among the states. That as soon as unforeseen objections were entertained towards it by their fellow-citizens, "a great majority" of its members, in conformity with the advice of Gen. Washington, and in patriotic deference to the sovereignty of the public will, resolved on its immediate annihilation. That this radical measure was prevented *solely* by an accidental circumstance, which opposed to it their respect, gratitude, and attachment for the French officers, who in compliance with their invitation, and by permission of their own government had become members of it. That, influenced by a desire to comply with the opinions of their countrymen, and at the same time to avoid disrespect to their foreign friends, they pruned off the hereditary quality, and other objectionable parts of their institution, and preserved only so much as might support the foreign branch. That this reformation satisfied the people of the United States, who felt a pride in the estimation in which the society was held abroad, and would view, with "extreme affliction," any evidence of a decline in that flattering sentiment.

This, he says, is "the true history," of the society. It does not look like "*carving out for itself hereditary distinctions,*" or "*lowering over the constitution eternally.*" And as to "accumulating a capital in their separate treasury," he declares the object of that *design* (for no capital of any consequence ever was accumulated, the great majority of the officers having lived and died poor,) was to relieve the necessities of their unfortunate associates; and that the funds, should any be collected, were to be placed for that purpose in the treasuries of the several states.

As he affirms that his account to M. de Meusnier was *a true history*, it is hardly necessary to say that the one here given to Mr. Madison, could not be any thing but a libel, upon men whose patriotism, benevolence, friendship and modesty, throughout all its stages, he himself had solemnly attested. That he presented the genuine account to his French friend, and put the base one on Mr.

which is sure of going down to the latest posterity, I thought it material to set facts to rights, as much as possible." Then, after stating that his apprehensions of possible ill consequences from the establishment of such an institution, had been rather increased than diminished by observations he had made in Europe; all of which apprehensions the experience of a very few years proved to be utterly groundless, he adds, "When the society themselves shall weigh the possibility of evil, against the impossibility of any good to proceed from this institution, I cannot help hoping they will eradicate it. *I know they wish the permanence of our governments, as much as any individual composing them.*"

Madison, you may be inclined to attribute to the predominance of familiarity over respect, in their intimacy. But the fact is, that the truth was to be locked up in a foreign library, or to reach few American readers, and was intended to minister to no ulterior purpose. Whereas, the article fabricated for Mr. Madison, was for home consumption; was a thread in that web of misrepresentation which he was weaving around the character of Gen. Washington—a web of torments—which, if we believe him,\* were not less fierce and mighty, than those which writhe and swell the figure of Canova's Hercules—when the distracted demigod—

“————— felt the envenom'd robe, and tore,  
Through pain, up by the roots Thessalian Pines;  
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw  
Into the Euboic sea.”

These torments were cruelly inflicted, as they were calmly witnessed, for the purpose of bringing his own claims before the people with a better chance of success.

As this hatred and suspicion of the Cincinnati society were evidently spurious and unfounded, you will be the less surprised to learn, that the zeal expressed in the same letter, in behalf of the democratic societies, “the friends of popular rights,” was not

\* The pain which these and similar slanders inflicted on the feelings of Gen. Washington, and the remorseless *philosophy* with which it was contemplated by Mr. Jefferson, are thus described by the latter. “The President was much inflamed; got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself; ran on much on the personal abuse which had been bestowed on him; defied any man on earth to produce one single act of his since he had been in the government, which was not done on the purest motives; that he had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since; that by God he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made *Emperor of the world*; and yet that they were charging him with wanting to be a king. That that rascal *Freneau* sent him three of his papers every day, as if he thought he would become the distributor of his papers; that he could see in this nothing but an impudent design to insult him; he ended in this high tone.” (Vol. IV. p. 491.) Again, “He adverted to a piece in *Freneau’s paper*; he said he despised these attacks on him personally”—“He was evidently sore and warm, and I took his intention to be, that I should interpose in some way with *Freneau*, perhaps withdraw his appointment as translating clerk to my office. But I will not do it. His paper has saved the constitution.” (P. 485.)

Not to speak of the indecency of the Secretary of State’s thus patronising an editor who was abusing and insulting the President daily to his face—devoting the labour he owed the government to the purpose of obstructing and reviling it—I will only bring to your notice the rule Mr. Jefferson himself laid down when he became President, with regard to disaffected *employés*—(Vol. IV. p. 99.) “I have only requested they would be quiet, and they should be safe; that if their conscience urges them to take an active and zealous part in opposition, it ought also to urge them to retire from a post which they could not conscientiously conduct with fidelity to the trust reposed in them; and on failure to retire, I have removed them.” The officer who *abused* and *insulted* President Washington, was to be patronised and encouraged, as “the saviour of the constitution”—he who should *oppose* President Jefferson, to be removed as “un-faithful to his trust!”

the fruit of principle but of interest. At page 345, of his fourth volume, is a letter from Mr. Jefferson of the 6th of March, 1822, in which he declines an invitation to become a member of a society whose object was "to promote civilization and improvement among the Indians." In this letter he observes—"I shall not undertake to draw a line of demarcation between private associations of laudable views and unimposing numbers, and those whose magnitude may rivalise and jeopardise the march of regular government. Yet such a line does exist. I have seen the days—they were those which preceded the Revolution; when even this last and perilous engine became necessary: but they were days which no man would wish to see a second time." He proceeds to deprecate such associations upon the ground of their being bad and prolific examples, of being "wheels within a wheel," and by reference to the excesses perpetrated by the Jacobin Clubs of France.

It would appear therefore that while Mr. Jefferson felt called on "as a good citizen" to discourage a society instituted for the purpose of "promoting civilization and improvement among the Indians," as setting a dangerous example, and tending "to rivalise and jeopardise the march of regular government—" he pronounced Gen. Washington guilty of "an inexcusable aggression on popular rights," when he discountenanced in terms of anxious patriotism and considerate dignity, the proceedings of organized political clubs, which had nearly involved us in foreign war, in opposition to "the march of regular government," and had, as he and his whole Cabinet believed, and as a majority of the members of the legislature declared, fomented a formidable domestic insurrection.

Since, of his contradictory opinions on this subject, those expressed in his letter to Mr. Morse, are said to be *conscientious*, the natural and melancholy conclusion is, that the false and scandalous ones again fall to the share of Mr. Madison.

But to go on with his letter of December, 1794. After attempting to separate these societies from their proceedings, affecting "to put out of sight the persons" whose confessed *misdemeanours* he calls *misbehaviour*, he proceeds to affirm that the President's allusion to them was generally and justly considered "an abstract attempt on the natural and constitutional rights of the people."

The injustice of these expressions is much more conspicuous than their meaning. What is "an abstract attempt," on a practical subject—or on any subject? But a more important question is, what sense of equity was Mr. Jefferson guided by, when he pronounced the societies innocent, in spite of practical guilt, and Gen. Washington guilty, in spite of practical innocence? Is this judging the tree by its fruits, or men by their works?

It may be here observed, that while in his letters to Gen. Washington of May the 14th and September the 7th, 1794, and that of June the 19th, 1796, the last, it appears, he ever wrote him, he was *humbugging* that confiding friend, that kind benefactor, that

illustrious patriot, with professions of undiminished attachment for him, unabated love for retirement and repugnance to politics—with such expressions as “I cherish tranquillity too much to suffer political things to enter my mind at all,” “it is a great pleasure to me to retain the esteem and approbation of the President,” “I put away this disgusting dish of old fragments, and talk to you about my peas and clover,” with “the Albany pea”—“the hog pea”—“the true winter vetch”—“the Carolina drill”—and “the Scotch threshing machine,” he was collecting from “an extensive circle of observation and information,” and transmitting to the head of the opposition in Congress, the most unjust and poisonous opinions that could possibly be fabricated of the President’s character and conduct. This would of itself have furnished cause sufficient for Gen. Lee, or any other sincere friend of the President, to put him on his guard, to open his eyes to the ambush from which this pretended friend and philosopher was secretly wounding him—where too his great and patriotic soul felt injury the most acutely—in the love and confidence of his country.\*

The next subject of crimination against Gen. Washington, grows out of that which has been considered the second in importance and advantage among the measures of his administration, viz: the suppression of the western insurrection. As by the first, his proclamation of neutrality, he gave a just and independent direction to our character as a nation, and averted the calamities of foreign war, so by his repression of this extravagant rebellion, he confirmed the power of our institutions at home, and saved us from the horrors of civil bloodshed. To form a correct estimate of this censure, it will be necessary to attend to a fair and unprejudiced account of that event in our history which is taken from Marshall’s life of Washington,† and is confirmed in every particular by Ramsay in his history of the United States.‡

From these authorities it appears, that when in the year 1791 it was found that the revenue arising from duties which had been laid

[\* Lest any one should suspect that the political activity of Mr. Jefferson at this period is exaggerated in the text—seeing how opposite such conduct was to his invariable declarations to friend and foe—I will cite from the reference in the last note the following scrap. “It is certain that Monticello was in this (1794) and the two succeeding years, the head-quarters of those opposed to the federal policy, and that few measures of the republican party in Congress were undertaken without his advice or concurrence. *He even had an agency in directing the attacks of the opposition journals;* and manuscript draughts, bills, resolutions and reports, prepared by him about that period, are yet exhibited by those who are curious in autographs, or in the political history of the times. Some of the members of Congress from Virginia, Kentucky and the Southern States were his intimate friends; and with a part of these he communicated not only by letter, but also by a personal intercourse during the summer on their visits to the watering places in the mountains of Virginia. Among his most frequent visitors were Mr. Madison, Mr. Monroe and Mr. Giles.”]

† Vol. V. pp. 286 to 93, and 575 to 90.

‡ Vol. III. pp. 74, 5, 6, 7, 8.

on imported articles, though carried to the highest productive limit, would not be sufficient to discharge the current expenses of the government, and maintain the public credit, it was proposed by the executive that a duty should be laid on spirits distilled within the United States. This proposition was resisted by the opposition in Congress, as an excise law, odious in name and oppressive in character—and as a substitute for it, *that party* recommended a *stamp act*. The bill, however, for laying a duty on domestic spirits passed into a law by a vote of 35 to 21, in the House of Representatives, and by a more decided majority in the Senate.

The opposition it encountered in Congress was soon distributed through various parts of the Union, and took root with peculiar strength and tenacity in the tramontane counties of Pennsylvania; a district, the inhabitants of which had manifested a general dislike to the constitution under the authority of which the obnoxious duty was imposed. It advanced through all the stages of seditious violence—from loud discontent to frequent acts of treason, and from these to open and general insurrection. Marshall thus describes these outrages and the conduct of the government on this critical occasion.

"On the part of the Executive, this open defiance of the laws, and of the authority of the government, was believed imperiously to require that the strength and efficacy of those laws should be tried. Against the perpetrators of some of the outrages which had been committed, bills of indictment had been found in the courts of the United States, upon which process was directed to issue; and at the same time process was also issued against a great number of noncomplying distillers. Charging himself with the service of these processes, the marshal repaired in person to the country which was the scene of these disorders. On the 15th of July (1794) while employed in the execution of his duty, he was beset on the road by a body of armed men, who fired on him, but fortunately did him no personal injury. At day break the ensuing morning, a party attacked the house of Gen. Nevil, the inspector; but he defended himself resolutely, and obliged the assailants to retreat. Knowing well that this attack had been preconcerted, and consequently apprehending that it would be repeated, he applied to the militia officers and magistrates of the county for protection. The answer was, that owing to the too general combination of the people to oppose the revenue system, the laws could not be executed so as to afford him protection: that should the *posse comitatus* be ordered out to support the civil authority, few could be got that were not of the party of rioters. On the succeeding day, the insurgents re-assembled to the number of about 500; to renew their attack on the house of the inspector. On finding that no protection could be afforded by the civil authority, he applied to the commanding officer at Fort Pitt, and had obtained a detachment of eleven men from that garrison, who were

joined by Major Kirkpatrick. Successful resistance to so great a force being obviously impracticable, a parley took place, at which the assailants, after requiring that the inspector and all his papers\* should be delivered up, demanded that the party in the house should march out and ground their arms. This being refused the parley terminated and the assault commenced. The action lasted until the assailants set fire to several adjacent buildings, the heat from which was so intense, that the house could be no longer occupied. From this cause, and from the apprehension that the fire would soon be communicated to the main building, Major Kirkpatrick and his party surrendered themselves. The marshal and Col. Pressly Nevil were seized on their way to Gen. Nevil's house, and detained until two the next morning. The marshal, especially, was treated with extreme rudeness. His life was frequently threatened, and was probably saved by the interposition of some leading characters who possessed more humanity, or more prudence than those with whom they were associated. He could only obtain his safety or liberty by entering into a solemn engagement, which was guaranteed by Col. Nevil, to serve no more process on the western side of the Alleghany Mountains. The marshal and inspector having both retired to Pittsburg, the insurgents deputed two of their body, one of whom was a justice of the peace, to demand that the former should surrender all his process, and that the latter should resign his office: threatening in case of refusal to attack the place, and seize their persons. These demands were not acceded to; but Pittsburg affording no security, these officers escaped from the dangers which threatened them, by descending the Ohio, after which, they found their way by a circuitous route to the seat of government. The perpetrators of these treasonable practices would, of course, be desirous to ascertain their strength, and to discover any latent enemies who might remain unsuspected in the bosom of the disaffected country. To obtain this information, the mail from Pittsburg to Philadelphia was stopped by armed men, who cut it open, and took out the letters it contained. In some of these letters, a direct disapprobation of the violent measures which had been adopted was openly avowed; and in others expressions were used which indicated unfriendly dispositions towards them. Upon acquiring this intelligence, delegates were deputed from the town of Washington to Pittsburg where the writers of the offensive letters resided, to demand the banishment of the offenders. A prompt obedience to this demand was unavoidable, and the inhabitants of Pittsburg, who were convened on the occasion, engaged to attend a general meeting of the people, who were to assemble the next day at Braddock's field, in order to carry into effect such further measures as might be deemed advisable.

\* "The inspector had left the house and secreted himself—the demand of the papers was acceded to."—*Note by Marshall.*

ble, with respect to the excise and its advocates. They also determined to elect delegates to a convention which was to meet on the 14th of August, at Parkinson's ferry. The avowed motives to these outrages were to compel the resignation of all officers engaged in the collection of the duties on distilled spirits; to withstand by force of arms the authority of the United States, and thereby to extort a repeal of the law imposing those duties, and an alteration in the conduct of government. Affidavits attesting this serious state of things were laid before the Executive. The opposition had now progressed to a point which seemed to forbid the continuance of a temporising system. The efforts at conciliation, which, for more than three years the government had persisted to make, and the alterations repeatedly introduced into the act, for the purpose of rendering it less exceptionable, instead of diminishing the arrogance of those who opposed their will to the sense of the nation, had drawn forth sentiments indicative of designs much deeper than the evasion of a single act. The execution of the laws had at length been resisted by open force, and a determination to persevere in these measures was unequivocally manifested. To the government was presented the alternative of subduing, or of submitting to, this resistance. The act of Congress which provided for calling forth the militia "to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection, and repel invasions," required as a prerequisite to the exercise of this power, "that an associate justice, or the judge of the district, should certify that the laws of the United States were opposed, or their execution obstructed, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals." In the same act it was provided, "that if the militia of the State where such combinations may happen, shall refuse, or be insufficient to suppress the same, the President may employ the militia of other states." By the unanimous advice of the cabinet, the evidence which had been transmitted to the President was laid before one of the associate justices, who gave the certificate, which enabled the chief magistrate to employ the militia in aid of the civil power."

After relating the deliberations of the Cabinet on the amount of force and mode of proceeding, advisable on the occasion, stating that Gen. Mifflin, the governor of Pennsylvania, when consulted, was of opinion that the militia of his state would not be competent to the object of putting down the insurgents; that the President issued one proclamation, recapitulating the steps that had been taken by the insurgents in violation of the law, and by the government in support of it; and requiring the insurgents to "disperse and retire peaceably to their homes, on or before the first of September;" that a requisition was made on the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, for quotas of militia to compose an army of 15,000 men, in the hope that the greatness of the

force would prevent bloodshed; that a deputation consisting of Judge Yates of the superior court, Mr. Ross, a senator from Pennsylvania and a gentleman of great popularity in the disaffected country, and the Attorney-General of the United States, also a citizen of Pennsylvania, were despatched by Gen. Washington to offer to the insurgents a general amnesty upon the sole condition of future submission to the laws; and that at the request of the executive, and for the purpose of giving success to this last effort, to avoid the employment of military force; the governor of Pennsylvania appointed commissioners to act in concert with these deputies; that this last effort at conciliation was unavailing; that the insurgents proceeded in their outrageous spirit, and in extending the circle of resistance into the neighbouring states of Maryland and Virginia,—that the President issued a second proclamation on the 25th September, describing to the public, the “obstinate and perverse spirit,” in which the lenient propositions of the government had been received, and declaring his fixed determination to do his duty, to see the laws faithfully executed, and to bring the refractory to obedience; that the command of the expedition was conferred on Governor Lee of Virginia, and that the governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey commanded under him the militia of their respective states, and that the President in person visited the two divisions of the party at Cumberland and Bedford. Marshall thus proceeds: “From Cumberland and Bedford the army marched in two divisions into the country of the insurgents. As had been foreseen, the greatness of the force prevented the effusion of blood. The disaffected did not assemble in arms. Several of the leaders who had refused to give assurances of future submission to the laws, were seized, and some of them detained for legal prosecution. A Mr. Bradford, who, in the latter stages of the insurrection, had manifested peculiar violence, and had openly advocated an appeal to arms, made his escape into the territories of Spain. But although no direct and open opposition was made, the spirit of insurrection was by no means subdued. A sour and malignant temper displayed itself, which indicated but too plainly that the disposition to resist, had only sunk under the presence of the great military force brought into the country, but would rise again, should that force be suddenly removed. It was therefore thought advisable to station for the winter, a detachment, to be commanded by Major Gen. Morgan, in the centre of the disaffected country. Thus without shedding a drop of blood,\* did the prudent vigour of the Executive, terminate an insurrection which, at one time, threatened to shake the government of the United States to its foundation.”

Here we see from two historians, whose narrations concur, and

\* “Two persons who were convicted of treason, received pardon.”

*Note by Marshall.*

have never been contested, that what Mr. Jefferson chose to call "transactions against the excise law;" and to represent as having been "nothing more than riotous," was really an avowed and armed opposition to the executive, legislative, and judicial authority of the United States. That it had existed for more than three years, and had been persevered in, in spite of the tender consideration of the legislature, and the patriotic forbearance of the executive; and had advanced from an organized disobedience of the law, to a military attack upon its officers. That one detachment of the insurgents had seized and violated the public mail, on its route to the seat of government; that another had waylaid and shot at a civil officer in the execution of his duty; that a third had laid siege to the house of the inspector, and forced a detachment of the United States' troops to surrender at discretion; that from intimidating particular agents of government, they had proceeded to expel from their homes and banish from their country, bodies of peaceable, orderly citizens; that they had rejected all terms of conciliation, and openly proclaimed their determination to control the national legislature by military force.

It is impossible to suppose that Mr. Jefferson could have been ignorant of the outrages of these deluded people, and of their infamous leaders; for, independently of their alarming notoriety, they took place in the interval between December, 1791, and September, 1794, during all but nine months of which term he was at the head of Gen. Washington's cabinet. Nor could he be ignorant, that of this strong and turbulent district, thus obstinate in resistance, and determined on violence, the military population had been estimated at 16,000 men, and the fighting force ready for the field, at 7,000; a force about three times as great as that with which a feeble but ardent adventurer, gained the victory of Preston Pans; about twice the number of the army with which he won the action at Falkirk, and fought the desperate battle of Culloden; after having taken Edinburgh, Glasgow, Carlisle, and Manchester; and, penetrating from the remotest parts of Scotland, to within a hundred miles of London, had thrown an old and powerful kingdom into consternation.\*

Mr. Jefferson must have known likewise, that the governor of Pennsylvania had formally announced to the president, the inadequacy of the well-affected militia of that state, to subdue this revolt; that the condition attached to the act, empowering the government to call forth the militia of the states to quell insurrections, had been complied with, and that it was of a nature which, while it proved the existence of the insurrection, proved also that it was the duty of the executive to suppress it. He admits too, that "there was indeed a meeting to consult about a separation." Yet with all these treasonable acts and designs—this array of force and violence of

\* Smollet, Book II. Chap. 8.

spirit, in opposition to a law which he allows was constitutional, and to a government in the first years of its establishment, he has the injustice to heap this ridicule and execration on the lawful, moderate, and beneficial conduct of his own and his country's friend.

He goes on to assert, that although the excise law was admitted by the constitution, it was "an infernal law," discovering his disguised but real disrespect for that instrument; and to affirm that the culpable interference of the executive with the "transactions and riots" in Western Pennsylvania would lead to a dissolution of the Union. He then adds a piece of information, which besides its striking conformity with truth, reflects an interesting light on his own history. He declares notwithstanding the well known facts that some of the leaders of the insurrection had submitted, that others had been seized, and that one, the most obnoxious to punishment, had effected his escape into the territories of Spain, and that the authority of the law had been completely restored throughout the disaffected country—notwithstanding these stubborn facts—he assures Mr. Madison that from what he could learn, "although the western people let the militia army pass quietly, they were objects of their laughter not of their fear: and could have been cut off by one thousand men in a thousand places in the Alleghany mountains." Now who ever believes this may very reasonably infer that, when he as governor of Virginia, allowed Arnold with a force amounting to less than one thousand men\* to take possession of the capital of that state—at that time the strongest, as it was the soundest and most warlike in the Union—and to destroy or carry off the public stores in its neighbourhood, it was *laughter not fear*, which prevented Mr. Jefferson from cutting him off, and which permitted that traitor with a rope about his neck, after calling in his undisturbed detachments, to retire as he had advanced, by a march of twenty-five miles, in safety to his ships. And upon the same principle it may be supposed, when Tarleton with a few dragoons penetrated 80 miles higher up the country, and dislodged Mr. Jefferson from Monticello, that instead of escaping in a paroxysm of fright, as was generally believed, he really went off in a fit of laughter!"

The idea of censuring the employment of force because it was in danger of being cut off by the insurgents, of reprobating the expedition as improper, and ridiculing it as insufficient, must by its felicity engage your attention, while it furnishes one of the many examples left by Mr. Jefferson, of the weakness of his reason when opposed by his passions. It is placed in bolder relief by his assertion that the confidence of the insurgents and their detestation of the law and of the government had all been increased by this unrighteous act of Gen. Washington; and also by the fact that at the

\* Marshall, Vol. IV. p. 389.

very time he was writing this letter to Mr. Madison, he knew that Gen. Morgan with a detachment of the militia force was safely encamped in the midst of the insurgents, and keeping them in awe and order.\*

It is worthy of remark too, in reference to this part of his letter, that the very man who was the acknowledged father of the perpetual embargo law, and the chief magistrate who enforced its provisions, by which our revenue from customs was completely annihilated—is the one who denounced the excise law as “an infernal one,” and protested that the power of enacting it granted by the constitution was a vice in that charter.

His letter proceeds—“I expected to have seen some justification of arming one part of society against another—of declaring a civil war the moment before the meeting of that body which has the sole right of declaring war.” This passage it is impossible to consider without wonder. Here is a man of great reputation for talents and learning, of ripe experience, of long acquaintance with state affairs, who had been governor of Virginia at a time when that station was supposed to require public spirit and abilities, had been member of the Revolutionary Congress, envoy to France, and chief of a Cabinet over which Washington presided, and of which Hamilton was a member, gravely writing nonsense, which would disgrace the quibble of a county court attorney. He not only calls the employment of military force, in obedience to an act of congress, and to the president’s oath of office, for the purpose of executing a constitutional law and preventing the dissolution of the Union—“the arming of one part of society against another,” but accuses the president of having declared a civil war, and of having thereby illegally forestalled congress, which had alone the right of making that declaration.

In the first place it may be asked who ever heard of such a thing before as the declaration of a civil war? War has hitherto been declared by one sovereignty against another, by independent powers. In our first war with Great Britain there was no declaration of war on either side. In our second, there was a declaration on both sides—because in the first case the war was a civil one, a contest between portions of the same sovereignty; and in the second the parties were two separate and independent nations. In short, a declaration of war has always been understood to be an appeal to the great family of nations, in justification of a resort to the trial of arms, by one of its members, against another. It fol-

[\* Mr. Tucker says (Vol. I. p. 487,) “the ease with which this open resistance to the laws was quelled, afforded matter of triumph and congratulation to the friends of the administration, for the prudence and humanity of their course, and of censure on the part of the opposition for the vain parade and unnecessary expense of a force so disproportionate to the occasion.” Thus it would seem that Mr. Jefferson differed from all parties in deeming the forces of the government as fit only to be an object of laughter to the insurgents.]

lows as a corollary from this proposition that had war been declared against the insurgents, it would *ipso facto*, have removed all cause of complaint against them. For if they were proper objects of a declaration of war by our government, they were independent of the United States, and the excise law could have been no more binding on them than on the people of France or England.

But overlooking for a moment this absurdity, and admitting that the President had thus violated the exclusive right of the Legislature, let us see how Congress, if not forestalled, would have managed a declaration of war in this case. Was Mr. Madison the leading delegate from Virginia and the most accomplished debater in the House of Representatives, to have risen in his place, gravely announced to the delegations of the other states that the Northwestern district of Virginia was in a state of open insurrection, and solemnly required them to declare war against it? Was his colleague, who represented the disturbed district, to second or oppose this motion? If the first, what became of the right of instruction, the reality of representation; if the second, would not war have been to be declared against the honourable gentleman himself? Were the members from Pennsylvania to insist that the delegations from Massachusetts, New York and Carolina, should declare war against their state; and were the Representatives from Maryland to demand of Congress a similar favour? Is it not lamentable that such stuff as this should have been addressed by the *Sage of Monticello* to the *Sage of Montpellier*, for the purpose of effacing from the minds of the American people a just sense of the wisdom and patriotism of Washington and Hamilton; and is it not yet more so, that it should have had that effect?

I had hoped this letter would contain all I have to say in reference to Mr. Jefferson's statements and cavils, respecting the character of the Western insurrection and the policy of its suppression. But I find the subject, and I fear you will, as toilsome and extensive as the broad chain of mountains along which the disturbance took place. The conclusion of one branch of it is only the beginning of another, and while expecting rest, we are called on for further labour. However, as we may be said to have overpassed the crest of the principal ridge, we may reasonably expect to clear the whole range in the next letter.

## LETTER III.

If, as Mr. Jefferson seems to have required, Gen. Washington, after Congress had passed a law empowering him to employ the military force of the country, prescribing the condition and defining the emergency which were to render its employment proper—if after this condition and this emergency had been legally ascertained to have arisen, he had declined resorting to the means of restoring the suspended action of the laws, and turning round upon Congress had said he could not think of thus declaring war when they alone had the power of doing it, it is not easy to determine whether he would have been more liable to ridicule or punishment, more likely to provoke contempt or impeachment: either of which would have rendered less expedient the course of duplicity and injustice that with respect to him, Mr. Jefferson had then entered upon, and which, as you will perceive, with various windings and shiftings he pursued to the end of his life.

The broad insinuation which succeeds—that in his speech just delivered to Congress, he had uttered falsehoods—“the fables in the speech,” though more indecent is not more unjust than the observations which have been already noticed. Taken in connexion with them, it fully substantiates the complaint of Gen. Washington, “that every act of his administration had been tortured, and the grossest and most invidious misrepresentations of them made in such exaggerated and indecent terms, as could scarcely be applied to a Nero.”

To this complaint, the effusion of a strong and heroic mind, tortured by the unseen stings of calumny and ingratitude, Mr. Jefferson saw fit to make no reply. Gen. Washington, he discovered, though aware of the injuries aimed at him, was far from suspecting the hand by which they were dealt, and though warned by his faithful friend Gen. Lee, refused to admit a suspicion which might be unfounded, and would in that case be ungenerous. He saw, that instead of withdrawing his confidence he had actually renewed its expression, and in proof of it had revealed the substance of the information which had been conveyed to him—that like Alexander, he showed the accusation while he swallowed the draught. In this mood of magnanimity, so congenial to a soul of dignity and honour, and so likely to extinguish every rising suspicion, he sagaciously determined to leave him; forbearing to disturb a temper of mind, which, by opposing unguarded generosity to collected guile, was so favourable to the success of his machinations, or to commit himself, in reference to the unheeded warning of Gen. Lee, by any

thing more specific than coarse and irresponsible abuse of its author.

It cannot escape your observation, that this officer's character and feelings were, as well as the President's, deeply implicated in the censures and sarcasms thus levelled against the Western Expedition—an injustice, which, by reference to a letter to Mr. Giles, it seems was repeated for the edification of members in the next Congress. Mr. Giles, like Mr. Madison, was a delegate from the President's own State, (of which Gen. Lee also was a citizen) was second only to Mr. Madison in skill and eloquence as a debater, and was second to no man in violence of opposition; of ardent temper, and as deeply tainted with the doctrines of revolutionary France, as she was with cruelty at home and rapacity abroad. To him, Mr. Jefferson, speaking of this expedition, says (Vol. III. p. 318,) it was got up "to quell the pretended insurrection in the west, and to march against men at their ploughs."

Now even if Gen. Lee was, or ought to have been so much of a stoic as to be indifferent on his own account to this disparagement, to which Mr. Jefferson's place in the confidence of the President added weight, he may be supposed to have felt, and may be pardoned for the feeling, dissatisfied, somewhat on account of his friends and associates—of Gen. Washington, who distinguished him, though the youngest in revolutionary rank among the general officers employed, by conferring on him the chief command—of Gen. Hamilton, who earnestly concurred in that selection—of Gen. Morgan, the hero of Quebec, of Saratoga, and the Cowpens, the Ney of the West, 'the bravest of our brave'—who had from motives of patriotism and personal esteem, consented to serve under him on the occasion—of the Governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, who had buried their sense of existing equality and former precedence, in deference to the choice of the President and the demands of the crisis—of Gen. Smith, a distinguished revolutionary officer—in short, of the whole army, thus described to the Representatives of the nation, as the puppets of a silly and useless exhibition of military force, and the instruments of a criminal commencement of civil war.

As after this waste of absurdity and slander it will probably gratify you to contemplate subjects of good sense and truth, I shall here introduce a public letter, addressed to Gen. Lee, by Gen. Washington, on occasion of his returning to the seat of government after reviewing the army at Cumberland and Bedford, which exhibits in the clearest light, his tenderness for civil rights, his purity of purpose, and his scrupulous respect for the laws of his country—and also the opinion he entertained of the motives and conduct of the body of citizens who were engaged in this important and successful enterprise.

*United States, (Bedford,) October 20th, 1794,*

"To HENRY LEE, Esq.,

Commander-in-Chief of the Militia army on its march against  
the insurgents in certain western counties of Pennsylvania.

SIR,—Being about to return to the seat of government, I cannot take my departure without conveying through you to the Army under your command, the very high sense I entertain of the enlightened and patriotic zeal for the constitution and the laws, which has led them cheerfully to quit their families and homes, and the comforts of private life, to undertake and thus far to perform a long and fatiguing march—and to encounter and endure the hardships and privations of a military life. Their conduct hitherto affords a full assurance that their perseverance will be equal to their zeal, and that they will continue to perform with alacrity whatever the full accomplishment of the object of their march shall render necessary.

"No citizens of the United States can ever be engaged in a service more important to their country. It is nothing less than to consolidate and preserve the blessings of that revolution which, at much expense of blood and treasure, constituted us a free and independent nation. It is to give to the world an illustrious example of the utmost consequence to the cause of mankind. I experience heartfelt satisfaction in the conviction that the conduct of the troops throughout, will be in every respect answerable to the goodness of the cause and the magnitude of the stake.

"There is but one point on which I think it proper to add a special recommendation. It is this, that every officer and soldier will constantly bear in mind that he comes to support the laws, and that it would be peculiarly unbecoming in him to be in any way the infractor of them—that the essential principles of free government confine the province of the military when called forth on such occasions, to these two objects.

"First—to combat and subdue all who may be found in arms, in opposition to the national will and authority.

"Secondly—to aid and support the civil magistrate in bringing offenders to justice. The dispensation of this justice belongs to the civil magistrate; and let it ever be our pride and our glory, to leave the sacred deposite there, unviolated.

Convey to my fellow-citizens in arms my warm acknowledgements for the readiness with which they have hitherto seconded me in the most delicate and momentous duty the chief magistrate of a free people can have to perform; and add my affectionate wishes for their health, comfort and success. Could my further presence with them have been necessary, or compatible with my civil duties, at a period when the approaching commencement of a session of Congress peculiarly urges me to return to the seat of government, it would not have been withheld. In leaving them, I

have less regret, as I know I commit them to an able and faithful direction, and that this direction will be ably and faithfully seconded by all.

"G. WASHINGTON."\*

It will illustrate this manœuvre of Mr. Jefferson, in hostility to Gen. Washington's reputation and policy, to bring into view his own proceedings, in relation to the famous conspiracy of Burr. As a preliminary to this comparison, it is to be observed that with regard to this individual, as to every other with whom his interests came into real or imaginary rivalship, we shall find his language double-tongued, and his conduct insincere. You need not be reminded that they were competitors for the presidency, in an election, which after many ballottings in the House of Representatives, terminated in the choice of Mr. Jefferson. In his *Anas*, (Vol. IV. p. 520,) under the date of January 26th, 1804, he says, "I had never seen Col. Burr, till he came as a member of Senate. His conduct very soon inspired me with distrust. I habitually cautioned Mr. Madison against trusting him too much. I saw afterwards, that under Gen. Washington's and Mr. Adams' administrations, whenever a great military appointment or a diplomatic one was to be made, he came post to Philadelphia to show himself, and in fact that he was always at market, if they had wanted him. He was indeed told by Dayton, in 1800, that he might be Secretary at War; but this bid was too late. His election as Vice President was then foreseen. With these impressions of Col. Burr, there never had been any intimacy between us, and but little association."

*These impressions*, it would thus appear, had been conceived as far back as Gen. Washington's first administration, and had continued through that of Mr. Adams: Mr. Jefferson all this time distrusting Burr's character, and from an opinion that he was destitute of principle, avoiding his society. This, it must be confessed, is a lofty and disdainful attitude. On the reverse of the medal, however, we shall see him prostrate, and profuse in expressing the fondest esteem and warmest respect for this same marketable personage, after the commencement, and down to the termination of the very period assigned for the existence of his suspicious aversion. In a letter of the 17th June, 1797, from the seat of government, Mr. Jefferson, then Vice President, thus wrote to Col. Burr, (Vol. III. p. 356.) "Dear Sir,—The newspapers give so minutely what is passing in congress, that nothing in detail can be wanting for your information. Perhaps, however, some general view of our situation and prospects, since you left us, may not be unacceptable. At any rate, it will give me an opportunity of recalling myself to your memory, and of evidencing my esteem for you." After entertaining this estimable correspondent, with his favourite topics, abuse

of the party opposed to their common scheme of ambition, and with taunts and slander against Gen. Washington, he concludes,—“I am, with great and sincere esteem, dear sir, your friend and servant.”

On the 15th of December, 1800, when he supposed that the electoral colleges had returned himself President, and Burr Vice President, he thus pours forth congratulations and compliments to the person whom he professes to have considered deficient in integrity, and unworthy of trust, evincing at the same time his respect for truth, and for the people to whose confidence he owed his imagined triumph. (Vol. III. p. 445.) “While I must congratulate you, my dear sir, on the issue of this contest, because it is more honourable, and doubtless more grateful to you than any station within the competence of the chief magistrate, yet for myself, and for the substantial service of the public, I feel most sensibly the loss we sustain, of your aid in our new administration. It leaves a chasm in my arrangements, which cannot be adequately filled up. I had endeavoured to compose an administration, whose talents, integrity, names, and dispositions, should at once inspire unbounded public confidence, and insure a perfect harmony in the conduct of the public business. I lose you from the list, and am not sure of all the others. Should the gentlemen, who possess the public confidence, decline taking a part in their affairs, and force us to take persons unknown to the people, the evil genius of this country, may realise his avowal, that ‘he will beat down the administration.’”

If any thing can exceed the odious posture in which the hypocrisy of this letter places its author, it must be the detestation excited by supposing it sincere; for then his insinuated distrust against Burr, repeated in his *Anas*, “at a later date,” will indicate a still more execrable spirit. It is however, in either shape, not more despicable than ridiculous. For this outburst of flattery and gratulation was premature. Burr had received precisely the same electoral vote that was given to Mr. Jefferson, and the latter was not really elected for the station, the patronage of which he is here munificently dispensing, until the 19th of the following February.

But the frowns of aversion, and the smiles of contempt, must alike give place to the glow of grief and indignation, at perceiving that the man who was just about to fill the office of chief magistrate of our Republic, could denounce Alexander Hamilton, as “the evil genius of the United States:” Alexander Hamilton—a name, that no honest American can repeat without gratitude and admiration; a man, every exertion of whose intellect was luminous, every throb of whose heart was honourable.

He it was who, through the rudest season of the Revolution—when the governor of Virginia yielded his capital, unresistingly, to a feeble but cruel invader, his station, ingloriously to the weight of a crisis, which would have strung the nerve of a patriot’s arm, and scampered from hill to hill, before “a plump” of hostile troopers—

gave Washington the aid of youthful intrepidity in the field of battle, and of sage advice in the midnight tent; whose eloquence was as fervid as his courage, whose pen as brilliant as his sword, who assisted in forming, and excelled in recommending that Government, the chief honour of which Mr. Jefferson was about to wear: who, when his country had no credit and but crude resources, drew from his own mind, radiant with intelligence as the firmament with stars, a system of finance, which complete and efficient, energetic and just, from the instant of its production, furnished revenue, and established credit; a system which, though opposed, and reprobated, and denounced by Mr. Jefferson and his partisans, they could never through a domination of twenty-four years, either dispense with, or improve.

He it was, who, while engrossed by the claims of an official station, and fettered by the demands of a laborious profession; with the hard-earned wages of which he supported in honour and comfort a growing family; in the cabin of an Albany packet that was conveying him to the contention of courts and confusion of clients, wrote the first number of the *Federalist*—laying out the scope of that unrivalled political work, which of itself vanquished the enemies of the Constitution.

“‘Twas on a summer’s evening in his tent;  
That day he overcame the Nervii.”

Such was in miniature, the glorious man, whom Mr. Jefferson cursed as “the evil genius of his country,” whose conduct and motives through his whole political life, he never ceased to traduce, and whose memory, like that of Gen. Lee, he pursued with slander, long after the stimulated vengeance of the very person to whom he was now abusing him, had hurried its noble object to a bloody grave.

To this person he continued to manifest the most respectful friendship, as will be seen by a letter of the 1st of February, 1801, just before the competition for the Presidency was to be decided by the House of Representatives, and when it was desirable not to irritate Burr or disgust his friends. (Vol. III. p. 449.)

“Dear Sir,—It was to be expected that the enemy would endeavour to *sow tares*\* between us that they might divide us and our friends. Every consideration assures me that you will be on your guard against this, as I assure you I am strongly. I hear of one stratagem so imposing and so base, that it is proper I should notice it to you. Mr. Mumford, who is here, says he saw at New-York before he left it, an original letter of mine to Judge Breckenridge, in which are sentiments highly injurious to you. He knows my hand writing and did not doubt that to be genuine. I inclose you a copy taken from the press copy of the only letter I ever wrote

\* His favourite saintly phrase for the introduction of what, to speak indulgently, may be called a *humbug*.

Judge Breckenridge in my life; the press copy itself has been shown to several of our mutual friends here. Of consequence the letter seen by Mr. Mumford must have been a forgery, and if it contains a sentiment unfriendly or disrespectful to you, I affirm it solemnly to be a forgery, as also if it varies from the copy enclosed. With the common trash of slander I should not think of troubling you, but the forgery of one's handwriting is too imposing to be neglected. A mutual knowledge of each other furnishes us with the best test of the contrivances which will be practised by the enemies of both."

The difference here in point of fact is between the statements of Mr. Mumford, and the *press copy*, and as Mr. Jefferson himself affirms that from the commencement of his acquaintance with Burr, he was in the habit of expressing to Mr. Madison his suspicions of his honesty, and perceived that he kept himself in the market, it is reasonable to suppose that he indulged the same sentiments in letters to other gentlemen, and that consequently the *press copy* was mistaken. This is the more probable as a similar accident will hereafter be pointed out, and as he does not refer Burr to Judge Breckenridge, either for a sight of the letter itself or for a copy of it. The last sentence however contains the quintessence of deceit, where he tells Burr, that by reflecting on their mutual sincerity and reciprocal respect, he would furnish himself with the best possible test for detecting the poison of the mischief-making fabrications of their enemies. That is, 'if you hear any thing of me inconsistent with honour on my part, and with respect and friendship for you, you have only to feel assured that it is a base contrivance of our mutual enemies to sow tares between us. This is the reasoning I shall employ, should a similar stratagem be attempted on me.' Now only suppose that Mr. Madison had just at this time, discovered to Burr one of the "habitual cautions," which he had received in regard to him!

When, however, in 1807, his friend Burr was arrested on a charge of treason, he discovered that he had all along despised him, in spite both of his own endearing professions, and of the equally cordial effusions of his *press copy*. In a letter to Mr. Giles of the 20th of April, 1807, (Vol. IV. p. 74,) he says, "Against Burr personally I never had one hostile sentiment. I never indeed thought him, an honest frank-dealing man, but considered him as a crooked gun, or other perverted machine, whose aim or shot you could never be sure of.\*

\* From this passage of the text, there can be little doubt that when Arnold's detachment marched upon Richmond, Governor Jefferson in the hurry of the moment, was led to believe that they had "crooked guns," and consequently could not feel "sure" that their shot might not hit him on the other side of James river. This reasonable hypothesis, while it accounts for his slipping about like quicksilver on the right bank, all the time Arnold was in his Capital—a fact which he states without explaining it very clearly—(Vol. IV. pp. 39, 40,) creates a strong inference in favour of his patriotism, viz:—that but for their "perverted machines," he would boldly have attacked the enemy.

The contrast between these sentiments and those in the *Anas*, on the one hand; and those in his letters to Burr,—all volunteers, not answers—on the other; will be useful in enabling you to comprehend the difference of his style, when speaking to a man he hated, and of him. It justifies the inference that at the very moment he was so grossly traducing Gen. Lee to Gen. Washington, declaring that he had never “done him any other injury than that of declining his confidences,” he would have been glad, had there been the least prospect of promoting his own interest by it, to encumber him with epistles and *press copies* of homage and attachment.

Of the object of the conspiracy, his conduct in regard to which is now to be compared with that pursued in quelling the Western insurrection, he gives the following account in a letter of the 2nd of April, 1807, to our minister in Spain, (Vol. IV. p. 71,) “Although at first he proposed a separation of the Western country, and on that ground received encouragement and aid from Yrujo, according to the usual spirit of his government towards us, yet he very early saw that the fidelity of the Western country was not to be shaken, and turned himself wholly towards Mexico.” And in the letter to Mr. Giles of the 20th, he thus describes the points of treason he expects to be established, by witnesses whose testimony he affirms “will satisfy the world, if not the Judge, of Burr’s guilt”—“And I do suppose the following overt acts will be proved. 1. The enlistment of men in a regular way. 2. The regular mounting of guard round Blennerhasset’s island when they discovered Governor Tiffin’s men to be on them, *modo guerrino arriati*. 3. The rendezvous of Burr with his men at the mouth of Cumberland. 4. His letter to the acting Governor of Mississippi holding up the prospect of civil war. 5. His capitulation regularly signed with the aids of the Governor, as between two independent hostile commanders.”

These acts, he says, amount incontestably to treason. Yet the attack of five hundred armed men, on the house of the inspector of the revenue, and a detachment of the troops of the United States—the burning the inspector’s house and forcing an officer of the United States Army, to march out and surrender—the shooting at the marshal with intent to kill him, while in the execution of his duty—the seizing and violating the mail of the United States on its passage to the seat of government—the arrest and intimidation of the marshal—the banishment of those citizens of Pittsburg, who were suspected of allegiance to their country—open resistance to the laws, and defiance of the government—the rejection of an offered amnesty—the preparation of a force of 7,000 men to wage war against the United States, and to effect ultimately a dissolution of the Union—all these revolting outrages, in the comparative infancy of the government, when they were levelled at the peace and dignity of the nation, through the same and feelings of Presi-

dent Washington, Mr. Jefferson considered as nearly harmless, as provoked by "an infernal law," and as at most, merely "riotous transactions!!"

The force with which Burr was to accomplish his designs, he estimates as follows, in a letter of the 14th of July, 1807, to Gen. La Fayette, (Vol. IV. p. 97.) "Burr had probably engaged one thousand men to follow his fortunes, without letting them know his projects, otherwise than by assuring them the government approved of them. The moment a proclamation issued undeceiving them, he found himself left with about thirty desperadoes only." This conspirator, with his gang of thirty followers, however, was too formidable to be left unpunished, whether in due course of law or not, and therefore the President of the United States descended from his station, and took the lead in hunting him down.

Accordingly, on the 2nd of June, 1807, he opened a correspondence with the District Attorney of the United States, (Vol. IV. pp. 75 to 103,) which for indecency to the court, disrespect for the independence of a co-ordinate department, outrage upon the sanctity of justice, and cruelty to the prisoner, was never exceeded by the executive authority of any nation, in any age. After saying to Mr. Hay, "while Burr's case is depending before the court, I will trouble you from time to time with what occurs to me,"—he proceeds to counsel him as to the management of various stages of the prosecution, inspiring him all the while with distrust of the purity of the court before which he was pleading, until the 19th of June, when he makes a suggestion, the wickedness of which cannot be adequately expressed in any language but his own, (p. 86.) "I inclose you the copy of a letter received last night, and giving singular information. I have inquired into the character of Graybell. He was an old revolutionary captain, is now a flour merchant in Baltimore, of the most respectable character, and whose word would be taken as implicitly as any man's for whatever he affirms. The letter writer also is a man of entire respectability. I am well informed that for more than a twelve-month it has been believed in Baltimore, generally, that Burr was engaged in some criminal enterprise, and that Luther Martin knew all about it. We think you should immediately despatch a subpœna for Graybell; and while that is on the road, you will have time to consider in what form you will use his testimony: e. g. shall Luther Martin be summoned as a witness against Burr, and Graybell held ready to confront him? It may be doubted whether we could examine a witness to discredit our own witness. Besides, the lawyers say that they are privileged from being forced to breaches of confidence, and that no others are. Shall we move to commit Luther Martin, as *particeps criminis* with Burr? Graybell will fix upon him suspicion of treason at least. And at any rate, his testimony will put down this unprincipled and impudent federal bull-dog, and add another proof that the most clamorous

defenders of Burr are all his accomplices. It will explain why Luther Martin flew so hastily to the aid of his 'honourable friend,' abandoning his clients and their property during the session of a principal court in Maryland, now filled, as I am told, with the clamours and ruin of his clients."

You perceive from this that a *general belief, reported* to exist in Baltimore, of Burr's having meditated an unlawful enterprise, of *some sort or other*, and that Luther Martin *knew all about it*; with the *second hand* assertion that this knowledge could be proved by a *third person*, was cause sufficient in the humane and philosophic mind of Mr. Jefferson, to fix the stigma of treason on Luther Martin, by arresting him as *particeps criminis* with the prisoner he was defending. And if this unjust proceeding should fail of every other effect, it would at least have the happy one "of putting down this unprincipled and impudent federal bull-dog"—that is, it would silence him as an advocate for Burr—would deprive the prisoner of the assistance of the counsel on whom he peculiarly relied in a trial for his life, and thus expose him to all the violence and stratagem that the zeal of lawyers and the unbridled hate of the Executive could impart to the prosecution. Had this cruel project been fulfilled, Burr would have stood like Bothwell, his sword-arm broken and his dagger lost, while his blood-thirsty and hypocritical adversary, represented by the President, brandished his impatient blade aloft, and plunged it to the hilt in his body.

In unison with this unparalleled mixture of craft and inhumanity, more fit for the cells of the Spanish Inquisition than for an American court of justice, is his resentment at the zeal with which Mr. Martin undertook the defence of a man, who, though accused, was yet unconvicted, was under the legal presumption of innocence, had been dear to Martin as a friend, and had, moreover, a right, on the usual conditions, to his services. The whole correspondence with Mr. Hay, is of this cast, diversified occasionally with promises of new witnesses, and interspersed towards the close of the trial with insinuations against the integrity of the court; leaving but one doubt as to the disposition of President Jefferson at the time, that is, whether he was more eager to hang the judge or the criminal.\*

[\* No part of the conduct of Mr. Jefferson's administration showed its incapacity to meet any great emergency more clearly than its conduct in relation to this contemptible project of Burr. Mr. Tucker admits (Vol. II. p. 230,) that "There is indeed much connected with this project and its prosecution," (to wit: the legal proceedings against Burr,) "on which we cannot look back without regret and even mortification;" and says, "however natural and excusable in the great bulk of his (Mr. Jefferson's) party" was "the misplaced zeal" it manifested, "it is to be wished that he had been superior" to it. But to show the consternation into which the administration and its most prominent supporters in Congress were thrown, or, what would be worse, the tyrannical spirit which animated them, let it be remembered, that though Mr. Jefferson knew and communicated to Congress, the 22nd of January, 1807,

Now, if we look back to President Washington, whose influence in our public counsels, he had deprecated and decried, in a letter to

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that Burr had descended the Cumberland, just a month before, with but two boats, being disappointed in obtaining the quota of men calculated on from Tennessee—that the fugitives of his party from Ohio, with their associates from Cumberland or elsewhere, could not threaten serious danger to New Orleans—that the public authorities had been seconded every where in the West “by the zeal and spirit of the inhabitants, and that Burr would receive no aid from any foreign power, yet the very next day a bill for suspending the *habeas corpus* was reported to the Senate by Messrs. Giles, of Virginia, Adams, of Massachusetts, and Smith, of Maryland, in behalf of their committee, hurried through that body,” “and forthwith communicated to the other House in confidence with a request of its speedy concurrence.” But the spirit of the American people embodied there could not go it, but rejected almost unanimously the work of the Senate. The conduct of the minority in that body upon this occasion, may be explained and excused on the ground of reluctance to embarrass the administration in a measure, to justify which it had peculiar means of obtaining, and must have been supposed to possess, adequate intelligence. But what must we think of the fitness of men for such a government as this, who, to suppress such a project as Burr’s, with a full knowledge of his insignificant resources, resorted to the removal, however temporary, of a monument of liberty so dear to the whole Anglo-Saxon race, as the writ of *habeas corpus*? If they were thrown into consternation by such an affair as Burr got up, what would have been their predicament in a really dangerous crisis? Or is it rather to be supposed that because of three persons whom Wilkinson had arrested as emissaries of Burr, one had been discharged by *habeas corpus*, the suspension of that writ was designed to deprive Bollmann and Swartwout of its benefit, who were brought as state-criminals that very evening to Washington, and who were soon discharged under it? It is left to the admirers of Mr. Jefferson to choose between the horns of this dilemma. For the facts stated, see Tucker’s Life of Jefferson, Vol. II. p. 216.

If Mr. Jefferson’s violence against Burr is the more to be condemned because of former friendship, it is also the less excusable because of Mr. Jefferson’s approbation of rebellions generally. His correspondence about the time of Shay’s rebellion contains no censure of those insurgents, which I remember. On the contrary, he says to Col. Smith, in a letter dated November 13, 1787—“God forbid we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion!”—“What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.” The reader will find an account of this rebellion in Marshall’s Life of Washington, Vol. V. p. 114. Gen. Knox, then Secretary at War, computed the force of the party engaged in it at 12 or 15,000 men. “Desperate and unprincipled, they would probably commit overt acts of treason which would compel them to embody and submit to discipline. Thus would there be a formidable rebellion against reason, the principle of all government, and the very name of liberty.”

Gen. Washington, when informed of the state of affairs on the theatre of this insurrection, exclaims, “Good God! who besides a tory could have foreseen, or a Briton have predicted them!” Col. Lee, then in Congress, informed him that “the malecontents are in close connexion with Vermont, and that district, it is believed, is in negotiation with the government of Canada. In one word, my dear General, we are all in dire apprehension that a beginning of anarchy, with all its calamities, is made.”

As the confusion increased, the father of his country, more and more mortified at the clouds accumulating over “the brightest morn (to use his own words) that ever dawned upon any country,” thus unbosoms himself to Col. Humphries—“What, gracious God, is man! that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It is but the other day that we

this very Col. Burr,\* to the period when the western insurrection was suppressed, and the heads of that conspiracy, who had not fled the country, were placed at the bar of justice, do we find Washington stimulating the zeal, complicating the chicanery, or sharpening the Shylock weapons of the prosecution; do we find him looking out for witnesses, collecting imputations, proposing to muzzle the prisoner's counsel, or "to heap coals of fire on the head of the judge?" (p. 103.) No! his sentiments and conduct were honourable to his country, suitable to his station, and agreeable to the lustre of his unclouded virtues. "The dispensation of this justice," said he, in reference to the insurgents, "belongs to the civil magistrate," (that is the judge) "and let it be our pride and our glory, to leave the sacred deposit, there unviolated."

In a spirit of mercy congenial with this exalted justice, he pardoned the two offenders who were convicted of treason; and the danger of the crisis being over, had the prosecutions in other cases

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were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live;—constitutions of our own choice and making:—and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them!"

The sword was unsheathed. The insurgents attempted to dislodge Gen. Shepard from the arsenal at Springfield, but were repulsed with loss, and the celerity of Gen. Lincoln's movements at the head of 4,000 men in the depth of a northern winter, suppressed the rebellion, though not without the effusion of blood. Yet such an insurrection, aimed at the very existence of a large and important portion of the confederacy, so alarming and agonizing to the great and patriotic minds of the country, Mr. Jefferson wishes for the recurrence of every twenty years at least; while to secure and expedite the punishment of a few vagabonds, whose wild projects had already been prostrated, he is for suspending the great writ of *habeas corpus*; though the power of the general government to do this under any circumstances, formed one of his objections to the constitution! (See Tucker's Life, Vol. I. p. 254.)

Verily it would seem that Mr. Burke was right, when, in reference to the Jeffersonian school of politicians he said, "A cheap *bloodless* reformation, a *guiltless liberty*, appear flat and vapid to their taste." (Reflections of French Rev., Vol. III. p. 81.)

Consequently it is not wonderful if it be true, (as was asserted in a publication of the day, which, though breathing too much party passion, contains much wisdom, eloquence and truth,) "that in three insurrections, and two conspiracies to give up the territories of the United States into the hands of a foreign nation, all of which occurred in the very childhood of the republic, and within the compass of twenty years, not one being was concerned but those who made the party of Mr. Jefferson." (See Memoirs of Jefferson, published in 1809, Vol. II. p. 230.)

\* "I had always hoped, that the popularity of the late President being once withdrawn from active effect, the natural feelings of the people towards liberty would restore the equilibrium between the executive and legislative departments, which had been destroyed by the superior weight and effect of that popularity; and that their natural feelings of moral obligation would discountenance the ungrateful predilection of the Executive, in favour of Great Britain. But unfortunately, the preceding measures had already alienated the nation who were the object of them, had excited re-action from them, and this re-action has, on the minds of our citizens, an effect which supplies that of the Washington popularity." Letter to Col. Burr, June 17th, 1797, (Vol. III. pp. 357, 358.)

dismissed. And in the same spirit, Gen. Lee replied to certain individuals, who proposed to pursue Bradford into the territory of Spain, and bring him back for punishment, that the dignity of the laws was vindicated by his flight from their authority, and that he could never countenance a proposal which had for its object, "the hunting an American citizen to death."

Admonished by the length of this letter, I refrain from pressing any further at this time on your patience. Repair your attention, however, for by the next opportunity you may count upon receiving the conclusion of my remarks on the pregnant epistle to Mr. Madison.

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#### LETTER IV.

SHOULD your good nature revolt at the vindictive appearance of the examination, through the perplexities of which I am endeavouring to guide you, I have little to soothe it with, but an expression of my regret, or to relieve it by, but an appeal to your justice. If Mr. Jefferson's character is now for the first time to be displayed in its true light, and to be divested of the folds of artifice and delusion, in which he disguised it, it is only because he painted in false and opprobrious colours that of others; and though it be, when thus exposed, a subject of unpleasing contemplation, it may prove a useful and instructive study. In the system of the moral world, it seems to be established by Providence, that injustice done to our neighbour, should sooner or later recoil on ourselves. And naturalists tell us, that although, at first sight, the history of the lion appears more entertaining than that of all other beasts, yet that on close inspection, more vivid curiosity and agreeable wonder are excited by the structure of the spider—that sly insect, which—

"Throned on the centre of his thin designs,  
Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines,"

entangles and destroys the bold hornet and the blossom-loving bee.

Pursuing then the analysis of this envenomed letter to Mr. Madison, let us pass from its palpable injustice towards Gen. Washington and Gen. Lee, to the consideration of its main design, which is both concealed, and betrayed by an artifice, not unlike the trick of an Indian juggler. The object of all Mr. Jefferson's schemes and movements, of his friendships and hatreds, his slanders and praises; of that philosophy, for worship in the sanctuary

of which, he would have the world believe he was predestined by nature, (Vol. IV. p. 126, et passim,) of his *mis*-quotation from the Georgics, (Vol. III. p. 337,) his "mould-board of least resistance;" (p. 334,) of that retirement which was so profound, that lest it should be unnoticed, he proclaimed it in all directions, as the Irishman was to whistle when he should fall asleep; the real object of all these professions, passions, pretensions, and manœuvres, was the office of President. For this he deserted the Cabinet of Washington, against the entreaties of that illustrious man; and having got into a private station, for this, he was now wriggling and stretching to get out of it. To Mr. Madison, whose powerful aid was indispensable, he was holding out his hand for help.

In disparaging and traducing Gen. Washington so industriously, his intention was not to supplant him; for besides that he could neither have desired nor hoped to compete with him before the people, he knew the General was now in his second and last official term. But his design was by curtailing the influence of his name and opinions, to change the course of succession, which, should that influence be left unimpaired, the sense of the nation would probably give to the Chief Magistracy—devolving it first on Adams, whom he disliked, next on Hamilton, whom he hated; whose superiority in the Cabinet he had felt and still resented;\* whose ready eloquence, cogent reasoning, practical views, ascendant genius, martial spirit, and generous character, rebuked and foiled his own subtle sagacity, pusillanimous temper, and indirect ambition.†

\* "As to my participating in the administration, if by that, he (Mr. Adams) meant the executive Cabinet, both duty and inclination will shut that door to me. I cannot have a wish to see the scenes of 1793, revived as to myself, and to descend daily into the arena, like a gladiator, to suffer martyrdom in every conflict."—*To Mr. Madison Jan. 22nd, 1797.* (Vol. III. pp. 346, 347.)

† But Mr. Tucker does not agree with Sir Hudibras in thinking,

"That we are best of all led to  
Men's principles by what they do."

For though he records Mr. Jefferson's political activity, says, "It would seem that no course could have been more prudent, if political advancement had been Mr. Jefferson's object, than that which he took in withdrawing from public affairs" (Vol. I. p. 470)—And further records, that "the gratification afforded him by the second office in the nation, and the almost equal vote for the first, had on his happy temper the effect of putting him in" such "a good humour with all the world," that in the overflow of his heart he wrote such a letter to Mr. Adams, that Mr. Madison, through whom it was sent, withheld it, as certain to have no other effect upon Mr. Adams, "than to make him question either the sincerity or self-respect of the writer," (Vol. II. p. 14.) Though he states that Mr. Jefferson's pecuniary resources were much exhausted in pulling down and rebuilding "for the correction of some unforeseen defect, or in execution of some happier after-thought," his house at Monticello, "to give his countrymen a better specimen of architectural skill," than we had in Virginia—made "the salary attached to the office not insignificant in his eyes," (Vol. II. p. 13)—And though he had recorded Mr. Jefferson's suggestions, made as soon as he had reached this second office in the government,

As it was to be supposed that Mr. Madison was apprised of Gen. Washington's wish to appoint him Secretary of State, and for that and other reasons, retained a degree of kindness and respect for him, there was room to apprehend that his sense of justice would revolt at the gross and virulent detraction, which Mr. Jefferson, in execution of one part of his scheme, had thought proper to hazard. Therefore as physicians expel one poison from the body, by the introduction of a more energetic one, the sage of Monticello proceeded to counteract the occurrence of remorse, by means of those never-failing agents, vanity and ambition. While urging Mr. Madison to persevere in his meritorious opposition, and foretelling that a change of men and measures was soon to take place, he encroached so far on the "double delicacy" of himself, and the simple modesty of his friend, as to insist that if he does *retire*, it must only be "to a more splendid and a more efficacious post;" for which, by the way, by an evolution peculiar to his own tactics, he had himself *retired*. The heartfelt joy this promotion of Mr. Madison over his own head would give him, may be better conceived than described; steeped as he lay in the charms of a "retirement," which he protests he "would not give up for the empire of the universe."

Nothing could be more skilful than this move. Like that of a knight at chess, it placed in check King, Queen and Castle, all at once. It told the opposition that it was time to bring forward determinedly a candidate for the Presidency. It said to Mr.

"to come to a good understanding" with Mr. Adams, (that Mr. Adams whom he had all along denounced as a monarchist!) to prevent the succession of Hamilton, or in other words, to insure his own (last page of Vol. I.)—yet he, Mr. Tucker, thinks it "altogether unreasonable to question the sincerity" of Mr. Jefferson's many and various asseverations of his resolution to accept no more public employments, and of his love of retirement, which, we have seen, he said he would not give up for the empire of the universe! However, Mr. Jefferson himself says, (as Mr. Tucker records, Vol. II. p. 16,) "I cannot help thinking that it is *impossible* for Mr. Adams to believe that the state of my mind is what it really is. \* \* \* I have no *supernatural* power to impress truth in the mind of another, nor he *any* to discover that the estimate which he may form, on a just view of the human mind, as generally constituted, may not be just in its application to a special constitution." Now as no human being has this *supernatural* power, which Mr. Jefferson here seems to assert to be necessary to the discovery of his sincerity, on this subject of the presidency, we may be all excused for dissenting from Mr. Tucker's faith in it; which, in this case, is not only "the evidence of things not seen," but of a thing which, without supernatural gifts, never can be seen.

For further evidence of the solemnity with which he affirmed that by "retirement from office" had been meant from all office, high or low, without exception—and that "the question was for ever closed" with him—see his letter to Mr. Madison, Vol. III. p. 311, of his Writings,—and which is abridged, Vol. I. p. 495, in Tucker's Life of him—and remark how little his own party regarded his most solemn declarations on this subject. For in defiance of them, they run him for president; and in proof of how well they knew their man, we have seen that though he missed the first place, (to which he was reconciled by the most unpatriotic motives, if we may believe him or his biographer—see pages above cited,) he jumped with joy into the second.]

Madison, "as I have proposed you for this post, you cannot do less than support me, upon that principle of seniority\* and civility, which would be observed were we to come together at the entrance of a drawing room." It suppressed any scruples that a gentleman might feel at entering into an alliance founded on injustice to the father of his country, by overshadowing his judgment with clouds of vain incense and visions of future greatness, through which Mr. Jefferson's election could not but appear as previous and instrumental to his own elevation; and it conformed apparently with that rural seclusion which the artless philosopher loved as dearly as he did his friend Col. Burr, and was as willing to forsake.

These advantages of the manoeuvre, were not counterbalanced by a single inconvenience. There was not the slightest chance of Mr. Madison's superseding him, for besides that he was a man of personal modesty and of comparatively mild ambition, Mr. Jefferson, was entitled by pre-occupancy, to the head of the opposition; to precedence, by superior age, and the high diplomatic and executive stations he had filled, to the duties of which Mr. Madison was yet a stranger. Had it been in his wish therefore to put himself before Mr. Jefferson, it would not have been in his power. Mr. Madison's situation and character at the time, in short, render it a moral certainty, that Mr. Jefferson's professing a wish to see his election, was simply an expedient to promote his own.

In tracing his correspondence up to the 19th of June, 1796, when he wrote the letter in vulgar abuse of Gen. Lee, and cruel *humbug* of Gen. Washington, I shall not stop to notice those in which he exasperates the zeal of Mr. Giles's opposition; encourages and counsels that of Mr. Madison; hails the appearance of an inconsiderable demagogue in Pennsylvania as "an acquisition upon which he congratulates republicanism;" caricatures by a most invidious criticism one of the President's messages to Congress, and by lecturing Mr. Rutledge of Carolina, on the debt of public service he had left unpaid to the nation by his retirement from political life, endeavours to provoke a reciprocation of that grateful reproach.

These I shall pass by, as subordinate stratagems in his grand design, at once exposed by and exposing it, in order to examine his strictures on the next in succession and importance of President Washington's measures—the treaty of amity, commerce and navigation, concluded with the government of Great Britain, on the 19th of November, 1794, by our envoy Mr. Jay.

\* This principle of seniority is most carefully impressed on Mr. Madison, in a subsequent letter (p. 340,) in which, on finding that he had been out-voted by Mr. Adams, he states his reasons for being highly delighted with his own disappointment! "But as to Mr. Adams particularly, I could have no feelings that would revolt at being placed in a secondary station to him. I am his junior in life, I was his junior in Congress, his junior in the diplomatic line, and lately his junior in our civil government." Every shot in this volley of *Juniors*, went through and through Mr. Madison's pretensions to rivalry or precedence.

A sketch has already been attempted of our political parties, from their rise to the period at which Mr. Jefferson took his place at the head of Gen. Washington's cabinet. And it was then observed that occasions very soon presented themselves for such differences of opinion as were likely to be discovered by sects so oppositely constituted. But in the nature of our new relations with Great Britain, causes of peculiar excitement and discussion were found.

Washington and the great body of his political friends readily passed from real war to genuine peace, in conformity with the solemn assurance given to the world in the Declaration of Independence, that the citizens of the United States would thenceforth hold the British nation like the rest of mankind, "enemies in war, in peace friends." This promise they could well afford to fulfil, having signalized both their opposition to England, and love for their own country, their impatience of tyranny and devotion to freedom in the painful marches and bloody conflicts of a seven years' war. With the return of peace, to the minds of such men returned the sentiments belonging to it—justice, moderation, amity, good faith, and all those fair dispositions that lead to the mutual advantage of nations.

When, therefore, from the unavoidable delay which occurred on our part in executing that article of the treaty of peace which stipulated for the payment by our citizens of a description of debts due to the subjects of Great Britain, that government refused to surrender, in conformity with conditions in the same treaty, certain military posts on the southern margin of the great lakes, they used their utmost exertions to have our side of the covenant strictly performed, in order to secure the right dependant on it. In the same temper they endeavoured to preserve an exact neutrality in the war between France and England, and preferred negotiation with both belligerents, as long as it could be honourably maintained; to war against either, as the means of repairing the actual, and preventing the future injury, to which our commerce was exposed by their collision.

As the opposite party had not expended their animosity in the generous trade of war, much of it remained on the conclusion of peace; and as they had not been able to demonstrate their zeal in the revolution by such bold and patriotic evidences, as Gen. Washington and his followers had exhibited, they sought now to display it by an unseasonable hostility towards Great Britain. In this spirit they insinuated that the endeavours of the administration to execute faithfully the treaty of peace, and to establish a commercial intercourse with England, manifested, with other of their measures, a monarchical tendency in their counsels, if not a design to replace us under the dominion of the British Crown. To colour these imputations they alleged that our resistance to the encroachments of France evinced a secret partiality for England—incon-

sistent with the gratitude due to her rival, and the sympathy which one republic ought to feel for another.

Those against whom these accusations were directed, did not fail, in repelling them, to assert that they proceeded from politicians unduly partial to France, dishonourably insensible to the rights and dignity of their own country, and willing to gratify their lust of power, at the expense of her character and interest.

It thus occurred that a habit was engrafted on the public mind of regarding the measures of Government less as they affected our own prosperity, than as they seemed likely to bear upon one or other of these antagonist nations—a habit, which, by the machinations and predominance of Mr. Jefferson, among other consequences, encouraged that fond injustice and affectionate inferiority, with which, in a more or less insolent shape, we have been since regarded by the successive governments of France.

This being the disposition of the *ins* and *outs*—the one determined to condemn any connexion with Great Britain which did not secure, not only all our rights but all our pretensions, and not only all that we pretended to, but every thing that we wished for—the other compelled to choose between the calamity of a war, and the convenience of the best agreement, which, under existing circumstances they could negotiate; it is not surprising that the ratification of Jay's treaty, in which the concessions and advantages of the contracting powers, were pretty equally balanced, gave occasion to much discontent and violent censure.

In inflaming this discontent and exacerbating this censure, no one took more pains than Mr. Jefferson. In a letter to Mann Page (Vol. III. p. 314,) declining attendance at the exhibition of a village academy, he digresses to the subject of the treaty, and takes occasion from it to sneer most indecently at the President. In a letter to Mr. Madison on the next page (21st Sept. 1795,) urging him to answer a piece which Hamilton had published in explanation of the advantages of the treaty, he states his opinion of it in the following words—"It certainly is an attempt of a party, who find they have lost their majority in one branch of the legislature, to make a law by the aid of the other branch, and of the Executive, under colour of a treaty, which shall bind up the hands of the adverse branch, from ever restraining the commerce of their patron nation." This objection implies, not that any right of the United States had been sacrificed or interest neglected, but that the commerce of Great Britain was not to be restrained. As to the word *ever*, the violence of its misapplication can be conceived only by reflecting that the treaty in its principal articles was limited expressly to ten years.

In the same letter he tells Mr. Madison that a number of Hamilton's pieces had been sent to him, with an answer by a Mr. Beckley; and that he gave these, "the poison and the antidote, to honest sound-hearted men of common understanding," by way of experi-

ment. Finding that Hamilton's pieces, in spite of Beckley's answer, produced conviction on the minds of these honest common-sense citizens, he adds with rare simplicity, "I have ceased therefore to give them"—showing that this advocate for the diffusion of knowledge, for "leaving reason free to combat error of opinion," had no scruple in suppressing arguments however clear and convincing, if at variance with his own interested views. It does not appear that Mr. Madison could be induced to enter the lists in this controversy, finding it probably more easy to join Mr. Jefferson in reprobating the treaty, than to oppose Hamilton's logic in its defence.

After writing to Mr. Rutledge of Carolina, (Vol. III. p. 317,) "I trust the popular branch of the legislature will disapprove of it, and thus rid us of this infamous act, which is really nothing more than a treaty of alliance between England and the Anglemen of this country, against the legislature and people of the United States"—to Mr. Monroe, (p. 324,) that it was "a case palpably atrocious"—he thus pours out, in a letter of the 27th March, 1796, to Mr. Madison, then in his seat in congress, the full tide of his maledictions, upon the treaty and the President, (p. 324.) "If you decide in favour of your right to refuse co-operation in any case of treaty, I should wonder on what occasion it is to be used, if not in one where the rights, the interests, the honour and faith of our nation are so grossly sacrificed; where a faction has entered into a conspiracy with the enemies of their country to chain down the legislature at the feet of both: where the whole mass of your constituents have condemned the work in the most unequivocal manner, and are looking to you as their last hope to save them from the effects of the avarice and corruption of the first agent, the revolutionary machinations of others, and the incomprehensible acquiescence of the only honest man, who has assented to it. I wish that his honesty and his political errors, may not furnish a second occasion to exclaim, 'curse on his virtues, they have undone his country.'"

You will perceive that in all this *tirade*, not a single argument is advanced against the ratification of the treaty, nor a solitary objection specified to any one of its stipulations. This aspiring statesman who from recent correspondence with Mr. Hammond, the British minister in the United States, and with Mr. Pinckney the American minister in London, was aware of the difficulties in the way of any agreement on the subject of our commercial intercourse with England—who had himself been frustrated in feeling his way to a negotiation in regard to it;\* now when a convention

\* In an official letter from London, he thus impresses on Mr. Jay his opinion of the difficulty and almost impossibility of making a commercial treaty of any description with England—and perhaps Mr. Jay was indebted for a portion of this acrimony to having disappointed the following positive and prophetical declarations. (Vol. II. p. 4.) "With this country nothing is done, and that

had been negotiated by a gentleman of acknowledged abilities and patriotism, and ratified by the constituted authorities of the country, denounces the treaty, abuses its negotiator, and vilifies the illustrious citizen who sanctioned it, in all directions and in the most unqualified terms, without favouring his correspondents or his country with a single tangible objection to it. Had he discovered a clause of mischievous tendency, was it not his duty to point it out to the President, whom he admitted to be an honest man, or to the people who he knew would be prompt and fearless in maintaining the country's character and rights. The friendship and confidence of Washington which he still enjoyed required this of him as a man of honour—the offices of trust and dignity to which the people had elevated him, required this of him as a good citizen. There was ample time for the most deliberate counsel to the President, or to the nation. The treaty, though received by the government on the 7th of March, 1795, and approved by the senate on the 24th of June, was not even conditionally ratified by the President, until the 12th of August,\* such deep and anxious meditation did that wise and virtuous man bestow on it.†

nothing is intended to be done, on their part, admits not of the smallest doubt. The nation is against any change of measures: the ministers are against it; some from principle, others from subserviency: and the King, more than all men, is against it. If we take a retrospect to the beginning of this reign, we observe, that amidst all the changes of ministry, no change of measures with respect to America ever took place; excepting only at the moment of the peace; and the ministry of that moment was immediately removed. Judging of the future by the past, I do not expect a change of disposition during the present reign, which bids fair to be a long one, as the King is healthy and temperate. That he is persevering, we know. If he ever changes his plan, it will be in consequence of events, which, at present, neither himself nor his ministers place among those which are probable. Even the opposition dare not open their lips in favour of a Convention with us, so unpopular would be the topic. It is not, that they think our commerce unimportant to them. I find that the merchants have set sufficient value on it; but they are sure of keeping it on their own terms. No better proof can be shown of the security, in which the ministers think themselves, on this head, than that they have not thought it worth while to give us a conference on the subject, though, on my arrival, we exhibited to them our commission, observed to them that it would expire on the 12th of the next month, and that I had come over on purpose to see if any arrangements could be made before that time. Of two months which then remained, six weeks have elapsed without one scrip of a pen, or one word from a minister, except a vague proposition at an accidental meeting. We availed ourselves even of that, to make another essay to extort some sort of declaration from the court. "But their silence is invincible." With these emphatical and discouraging assurances in his pocket, or on his memory, Mr. Jay must have thought he would receive the thanks of Mr. Jefferson for bringing about a commercial treaty on almost any terms with Great Britain. But more especially had he a right to count on these thanks as his was the best commercial treaty we have ever had with that country—unless Mr. M'Lane's late treaty be as good a one.

\* Marshall, Vol. V. pp. 616, 17, and 33.

† Washington thus describes in a letter to Gen. Knox, the state of mind under which he ratified Jay's treaty. It breathes the purest patriotism in the most

But to exaggerate, not to correct, errors, in Washington's administration was Mr. Jefferson's object—and of course as he knew him to be an honest man, it would have been in total opposition to his policy, openly to warn the country of danger, or honestly to guard the President against mistake. Accordingly he preferred agitating surreptitiously the popular mind, through such leaders of public opinion as were disposed to second his schemes, by misrepresentations of *motives* and *consequences*—which being, these unborn, and those invisible, were susceptible of the most violent and licentious distortion.

By the treaty which is here so vehemently execrated, we obtained among other advantages, the cession of the military posts, south of the Lakes, and the consequent power of repressing the savage hostilities, which were annually draining us of blood and treasure; and we placed our commerce with Great Britain and her colonies on a footing which led to an immediate and unparalleled increase of our trade, tonnage and revenue.\*

It is true Mr. Jay could not obtain a stipulation against impressment. But were he and Gen. Washington to blame for this? As he wrote to the President, the terms were the best he could obtain—"to do more was impossible." Were they to have declined such terms, because one or two points were left unsettled, and thus deprive the country, for remote or unattainable objects, of palpable and present benefits. Because these great patriots determined to secure the advantages within their reach, and to leave for future settlement the subject of impressment, was it just that Washington should be denounced as a second Cæsar, ready to cleave to the earth, by the force of popular virtues, the liberty of his country; and Jay as a corrupt tool in the hands of a foreign government? Mr. Monroe, the favourite plenipotentiary of Mr. Jefferson, a man he avers "born for *the public*"—a saying which, like his description of Mr. Monroe's integrity, "turned inside out," would be found true; when Jay's treaty expired, signed another with the British government which was equally defective on this point. And

earnest language—"If any person on earth could, or the great power above would, erect the standard of infallibility in political opinions, no being that inhabits this terrestrial globe would resort to it with more eagerness than myself, so long as I remain a servant of the public. But as I have hitherto found no better guide than upright intentions and close investigation, I shall adhere to them while I keep the watch, leaving it to those who will come after me, to explore new ways, if they like or think them better."—*Marshall*, Vol. V. p. 635.

\* See Seybert's Statistics, for the years comprised within the operation of Jay's Treaty.

[Besides which, it caused to be "paid into the pockets of American merchants,—who, but for the treaty, would have found in a war with England the completion of their ruin,"—ten millions three hundred and forty five thousand dollars—a large sum in those days, and of great importance to our commerce and finances, ruined as they had been by the revolutionary war, and impeded in their recovery from its disasters by the iniquities of the belligerents of Europe. See Life of John Jay by his son, Vol. I. p. 378.]

**Mr. Madison**, after a fortunate and successful war, ratified a third treaty with the same government, which was likewise destitute of this indispensable stipulation.

The only security we have against impressment, we owe neither to Jeffersonian presidents nor ministers, but to the prowess and patriotism of a parcel of “impudent federal bull-dogs”—to Hull, Perry, M'Donough, Bainbridge, Stewart, Biddle, and their rivals in glory, who with the remnant of the *federal navy*, convinced the British nation and the maritime world, that it would be as safe to search the boiling crater of Vesuvius, surmounted by its column of smoke and flame, as an unarmed vessel, bearing the *Star-spangled banner*.

In the left-handed justice and interested obloquy of Mr. Jefferson, Washington and Jay were guilty of sacrificing “the rights, the interest, and the honour, of their own country” by failing to provide against the outrage of impressment, in the early infancy of our national existence; while Mr. Madison for neglecting to secure it in a more vigorous period of our growth, fortified as he was by our naval triumphs, our success at Plattsburg, our brilliant battles on the Niagara, and more than all, by Jackson’s splendid defence of New Orleans, is entitled to the praise (Vol. IV. p. 260) of having “spared to the pride of England her formal acknowledgment of the atrocity of impressment in an article of the treaty.” Whoever approves this allotment of merit, will be able to conceive, that in wisdom and patriotism, Madison and Monroe, were greatly superior to Jay and Washington.\*

[\* The paroxysm of folly and injustice into which our country was thrown at the epoch of Jay’s treaty, presents, in our history, a spectacle as instructive as mortifying. It ought to be made familiar to the American people, as a perpetual warning against the fearful delusions of party spirit, and the pernicious efficacy of the arts of demagogues. That the treaty was all the country desired, or those who made it were anxious to obtain, no one pretended. But it was made by Mr. Jay and sanctioned by Washington and vindicated by Hamilton as the best that could be obtained, and better than its alternative, a war with England. The first point, viz: that it was the best which could be obtained, time has incontestably established. Mr. Jefferson tried in vain to make a better, and the brilliant victories on land and ocean of Mr. Madison’s war were as inefficient as the diplomatic skill of his predecessor to produce that result. That a war with England was the alternative between which and the treaty we had to choose was admitted on all hands, and is proved by what followed after the treaty expired. Therefore the only point which in the justification of the treaty about which a doubt can be raised is, whether it was better for the country than the war which it prevented? That it was better for all the great interests of property, no one can doubt; and it is equally certain that if it compromised any points of honour, they still remain unredressed; and consequently no one can approve the peace we now enjoy who reprobates Jay’s treaty. For surely at the time it was made we were much less prepared to undertake to correct by force of arms the code of international law, or to vindicate nice claims of national honour, than at present. But be this as it may, there is no one in his senses who will not now admit, that good and wise men might have honestly thought that the policy then pursued by the administration was compatible with our honour and conducive to our interest. “Yet the treaty,” says Mr. Sparks

There were two other branches of Gen. Washington's policy, which, within the interval included between Mr. Jefferson's retire-

in his Life of Washington (page 504) was dissected, criticised and condemned, in a tone of passionate and violent declamation, which could scarcely have been exceeded, if the instrument had reduced the United States to their former colonial dependence on England." Mr. Tucker (Vol. I. p. 499) describes the entire democratic party from one end of the Union to the other "in a blaze of indignation upon the subject," and admits that Washington himself "escaped an imputation on his integrity only to endure the charge of weakness of understanding, and of being the dupe of the British faction around him." Yet even this gives but a faint idea of the wicked frenzy of the time. "Is it advantageous to a republic to have a connexion with a monarch?" asked the democratic press; "Treaties lead to war and war is the bane of republics. Commercial treaties are an artificial means to obtain a natural end—they are the swathing bands of commerce that impede the free operations of nature." Such is a sample of the stuff which was addressed to the country to prepare it to reprobate any treaty whatever which might be concluded with England. But after it had been sent to the Senate for ratification and its contents divulged by one of the members, against the rules of that body, the grand explosion of all the combustibles which had been collected by its adversaries, took place. In Philadelphia the 4th of July was desecrated to the orgies of a mob, who "paraded the streets with an effigy of Mr. Jay, bearing a pair of scales, one labelled 'American Liberty and Independence,' and the other, which was in extreme depression, 'British Gold,' while from the mouth of the figure proceeded the words, 'Come up to my price and I will sell you my country.' The effigy was afterwards publicly committed to the flames." Public meetings to denounce the treaty were got up throughout the country. At one of these, held at New-York, the great Hamilton was answered with stones, when he attempted to address the multitude, who, after adopting their opprobrious resolutions, paraded opposite Mr. Jay's residence, to present him and his family with the spectacle of their impotent rage, in burning the treaty which he had made for their good.

As to the fury of the democratic societies, it may be judged of by a resolution of one in South Carolina, pledging its members to "promote every constitutional mode to bring JOHN JAY to trial and to justice," and winding up its wickedness by asserting that "if he acted of and from himself, we shall lament the want of a GUILLOTINE!"

But if these senseless clamours were in themselves detestable, the object for which they were got up was even more preposterously execrable. They aimed at nothing less impossible than to intimidate Washington! How he met this "*civium ardor prava jubentium*," is well known, and universally regarded as completing his title to the praise of the "*Justum et tenacem propositi virum*"—the noblest object in all ages and countries of the highest eulogies of poetry or prose. He told the town of Boston, the old liberty cradle, which he himself had delivered from the pollution of hostile armies, but which, in the violence of the French epidemic had received a taint—that the constitution was the guide he would never abandon. "It has assigned to the President the power of making treaties, with the advice and consent of the Senate," and "that they ought not to substitute for their own conviction the opinion of others, or to seek truth through any channel but that of a temperate and well informed investigation."—"While I feel the most lively gratitude for the many instances of approbation from my country, I can no otherwise deserve it than by obeying the dictates of my conscience."

The worth, the wealth and the mass of the nation, were awakened to a sense of right and propriety and self respect, at the first sound of

"That voice, their liveliest pledge  
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults  
Their surest signal."

ment from the cabinet and the date of the letter abusing Gen. Lee, and even previous to that interval, were subjects of his censure and

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But the knots of Jacobins, coiled up together about the land, turned all their impotent hisses from the ministers of the President to the President himself. I refrain from repeating the gibberish of their forked and envenomed tongues. They but serve to add to the bestial similitudes which are unfortunately furnished by the conduct of mankind; and the reader of their brief history will be reminded of those globes of serpents, mentioned by Humboldt in the American tropics, which, in dread of the sublime bird of the region, roll up together their obscene folds, and present, as he soars calmly above them, nothing but a hideous surface of slivered mouths and hissing tongues.

“Sibila lambebant linguis vibrantibus ora.”

But it may not be impertinent, nor telling a tale too well known, to relieve this sketch of national delirium, by referring for a moment to the conduct of one, whose memory will ever be a national ornament, as his existence was a national blessing. The lesson afforded will thus be more complete, and shew the attractiveness of virtue, as well as the repulsiveness of vice. How was Mr. Jay, the chief object of all this obloquy, affected by the injustice of his countrymen? His situation as governor of New York, to which he had been elected while yet abroad, threw him amidst the bustle of politics and society. Yet not an act of his administration, not a word of his mouth, not a trace of his pen bore a taint or a tinge of resentment. Pitying his deluded countrymen, and but mildly rebuking their deluders, forgiving his enemies himself, and soothing the indignation they aroused in his friends, he trod with his wonted calm and determined step the high and the humble, but both alike sacred, paths of duty. To a letter from Gen. Lee he replies: “The treaty is as it is; and the time will certainly come when it will very universally receive exactly that degree of commendation or censure which, to candid and enlightened minds, it shall appear to deserve. In the mean time I must do as many others have done before me—that is, regretting the depravity of some, and the ignorance of a much greater number, bear with composure and fortitude the effects of each. It is as vain to lament that our country is not entirely free from these evils, as it would be to lament that our fields produce weeds as well as corn. My good friend, we must take men and things as they are, and enjoy all the good we meet with. I enjoy the good will to which I am indebted for your letter; and I enjoy the occasion it affords me of assuring you of the esteem” &c. To Col. Pickering he writes—“Ancient as well as very modern history teaches us lessons very applicable to the present times; and points out the necessity of temper, activity and decision. I think the President, with the blessing of Providence, will be able to carry his country safe through the storm, and to see it anchored in peace and safety: if so, his life and character will have no parallel.” “God governs the world, and we have only to do our duty wisely and leave the issue to him.” To Edmund Randolph he says—“The history of Greece and other less ancient governments is not unknown to either of us; nor are we ignorant of what patriots have suffered from domestic factions and foreign intrigues, in almost every age.

“It is pleasing, however, to reflect that our country possesses a greater portion of information and morals than almost any other people; and that although they may for a time be misled and deceived, yet there is reason to expect that truth and justice cannot be long hid from their eyes.” And to Mr. Duane he replies—“It is pleasing to see friendship, like an evergreen, bid defiance to the vicissitudes of the seasons;” and after enumerating the causes of the violence which prevailed, and saying that except as to the degree of its malignity it was not unexpected, he continues—“On the other hand, the highest confidence was reposed in the wisdom and firmness of the government, and in the virtue and good sense of the great mass of our people, who (especially in the eastern and

misrepresentation; for with him, ethics were so subservient to politics, that in regard to men and measures, these two operations were uniformly concurrent. The measures alluded to were, 1st, the system of finance suggested by Hamilton, for the payment of the national debt, and establishment of public credit; and 2nd, the establishment of a national bank. The history of these measures, of the enlightened and patriotic views from which they proceeded, the able support and strenuous opposition of which they were the objects, you may find in the faithful narration of Marshall.\*

One of the causes, which, by demonstrating its necessity, produced our present federal government, was the fact that the old confederation possessed no faculty of providing for the payment of the public debt. The old congress in which were combined inefficiently, legislative and executive powers, could only recommend to the states measures of supply. It had no authority either to prescribe or enforce those measures. The consequence of this want of punctuality and defect of capacity, was, that the vouchers of our foreign debt had greatly depreciated, and that those of our domestic debt had fallen almost to nothing. The disgrace and injustice involved in this state of things, made so deep an impression on the

middle states) possess a degree of information and steadiness not to be found in other countries." Then turning from politics he again indulges the feelings of friendship and concludes with wishing that his correspondent's family might remain "*like a tree planted by the water-side, whose leaf shall not wither.*"

I have selected these excerpts to show how this good and great man met the storm which was raging around him, and of whose most malignant fury he was the object. Above the insults of mobs and the denunciations of demagogues, his voice was heard, uttering an eulogy over the good sense and good feeling which would soon lead the former to repentance, and a sigh over the depravity which urged the latter into wrong. Calm amid all the confusion, he looked back with elevating reflections to the noble examples of history,—forward, with strong reliance on the great Chief and the good people of his country,—and upward with perfect confidence in the ultimate dispensations of the Almighty Ruler of the universe. Thus balanced and buoyed, he met with unruffled bosom every wave of the tumult, and shamed its clamours with the breathings of friendship, patriotism and piety. Thus have I seen a swan meeting a thousand billows with a breast of down, and breathing above their hissing and howling hubbub those soft, sonorous and silvery notes which rise in rapture till they sound no more. And thus to the end did this great and good man persevere—his long, active, useful and eventful life, in public so spotless, in private so pure; his passions so subdued, his piety so exalted,—and by this long career of ethereal virtue, his immortality at length so conspicuous through the mortal, that it did not shock the religious sense of the community where he lived to hear, nor impugn the taste of his eulogist to pronounce, that "a halo of veneration seemed to encircle him as one belonging to another world, though lingering among us. When the tidings of his death came to us, they were received through the nation, not with sorrow or mourning, but with solemn awe, like that with which we read the mysterious passage of Ancient Scripture, '*And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.*'"

For the facts and excerpts in this note, see Jay's Life, Vol. I. p. 357 et seq. The concluding extract is from an address by G. C. Verplanck, Esq., written soon after Mr. Jay's death.]

\* Vol. V. Ch. 4.

nation, that the first congress under the new constitution, deemed it their duty to require, by a resolution of the 21st September, 1789, the Secretary of the Treasury to report a plan for the redemption of the public debt, foreign and domestic; an instruction which, on the ninth of the succeeding January, he complied with.

This celebrated report pointed out sources of adequate revenue to be pledged by congress for the annual payment of the interest, and the regular redemption of the principal, of the whole debt which had been contracted by the nation in their struggle for independence, whether by the continental congress or by the several states. When it came to be considered by the legislature, it encountered various objections, honestly, no doubt, as they were certainly eloquently, urged. Some members objected to funding systems generally, and to withdrawing by a permanent appropriation, from the management of congress any of the legitimate objects of taxation. Others proposed that with respect to the domestic creditor he should only be paid the market price of the government paper—that is about twelve dollars in every hundred. Mr. Madison contended that a discrimination should be made between the original and the actual holder of the paper, paying to the latter the highest price it had borne in the course of its transfer, and to the former the difference between that and its nominal value—or the complement of this value—and of consequence, where the original was the actual holder, the full amount it represented. But the strongest opposition was directed against that section of the report, which included in the assumption the debts created by the states.

The objection to the plan of the Secretary, on the score of its introducing a funding system, found little support, and was quietly disposed of. The proposition to reduce the amount of debt, by availing the nation of the self-created depreciation of its own paper, was defeated by arguments drawn from its injustice, and from the bad effect it would have on the system of public credit, which it was the object of the resolution of congress and the report of the Secretary, to establish. Mr. Madison's motion to discriminate between the actual and original holders, from the eloquence and ingenuity with which he supported it, and from the specious idea it included of a remedial intervention against extortion, excited an animated and protracted discussion. But the fallacious equity on which it was founded, attended as it was by the despotic heresy of meddling with private contracts, and by the certainty that it would neither advance the credit nor reduce the debt of the nation, were ably exposed, and the proposition was lost by a large majority.

Arguments in opposition to the assumption of the state debts were derived from the great augmentation it would cause to that, which might be considered proper to the United States—an inconvenience which though momentous in itself, would have the more formidable consequence of creating such a host of dependents on the general government, and of setting in motion the power of taxa-

tion on so large a scale as to endanger the independence of the states. It was alleged that the constitution did not authorize this exercise of fiscal power, and that no occasion existed for it, inasmuch as the several states were competent to the discharge of their own engagements. The difficulty of distinguishing between the liabilities they had incurred for their own local defence, and those which had arisen from their exertions in the common cause, was relied on, as was the injustice of confounding in a common operation engagements dissimilar in character and unequal in magnitude. This indefinite increase of the debt, (for the amount of the state debts was not yet ascertained,) it was urged would have a bad effect on the public credit, by creating an apprehension that the national resources would not be adequate to its punctual liquidation—a circumstance which could not fail to depreciate the paper representing it, nor to perpetuate that greatest of national evils, a public debt.

In support of the assumption it was replied that the whole debt, both that contracted by the continental congress, and that for which the several states were answerable, had been incurred in a cause common to the Union—that in no case had the ordinary expenses, or civil list, of the states, exceeded their ordinary revenues; and that their debts consequently represented the amount of service they had severally contributed to the general defence—that in these operations the states were virtually the agents of the general government, which, upon principles of obvious justice, was liable to the state creditors—that the assumption was not, as it had been described, the prodigal creation of a new debt, but the honest acknowledgment of an old one—that if it could not be denied that congress had the right to create a debt in the prosecution of a second war, it could not well be disputed that they were authorized to discharge the debt contracted in the first; that the question was one not of quantity, but of principle; and consequently was not affected by the circumstance of the state debts having not yet been accurately computed.

A multitude of tax-masters would, it was said, lead to waste in the collection, as a variety of paymasters would, to waste in the distribution of funds out of which these debts were to be satisfied, and which in either mode must be drawn ultimately from the people. Inequality would exist and unfairness be suspected both in their collection and disbursement; circumstances which while they would not alleviate the general pressure on the people, would leave many of the public creditors dissatisfied. It was said to be absurd to impute to the supporters of this measure, a desire to perpetuate the public debt, as the proposition was not to contract a debt, but to pay one, and that moreover as the express object of the assumption was to discharge the debt, it was inconsistent with common sense to attach to it the opposite purpose of perpetuating it. It was urged that the apprehension of its giving undue influence to the general government was at variance with the objection that it would give

perpetuity to the debt—for this influence must be the result of credit, which could not exist unless the debt was regularly liquidated. And it was contended that the assumption, while it would quiet a large body of citizens, would put an end to that speculation which was so anxiously deprecated.

These were the principal arguments advanced in the debate, as it was reported in the journals of the day and is condensed in the History of Marshall; and they are here recapitulated in order that you may judge whether on the part of the supporters of the assumption, there appears any thing like a design to convert our republic into a monarchy. No such design was imputed to them in the discussion; and the accusation seems to have been first propagated, as it was last repeated by Mr. Jefferson, the vilifier general of the friends and measures of Washington; predicting of these, the most pernicious consequences; and ascribing to those, the worst conceivable motives. Two features in the measure alluded to—one that no discrimination was made between the first and last holder of the public paper—the other, that the debts incurred by the several states, in a war undertaken by common consent and prosecuted in common defence, were put on the same footing with those contracted by the general government—were made the occasion of his charge upon Hamilton especially, and the political supporters of Washington generally, of a design to subvert our republican institutions, and to establish a monarchy on their ruins.

This calumny which he specifies (Vol. IV. p. 145, et passim.) as, “a longing for a King, and an English King, rather than any other”—he invented in 1791, when the wounds received by these valiant patriots in liberating us from an English King, were yet fresh and bleeding—and maintained until the day of his death in 1826, with an evergreen vivacity of slander, which drew rancour from the frosts of age, and spread forth its poisonous branches, as the graves of its victims thickened around. To every age, and through every state, it was distributed by his correspondence. The credulity of the young, the prejudices of the old, and the interests of both, were enlisted in its circulation; and not content with defaming the ornaments of his country at home, he industriously proclaimed this calumny abroad. Lafayette and Kosciusko were assured that their chosen friends in the United States had been defeated in an attempt to undermine the liberties of their country; and Mazzei, an Italian adventurer, was made the instrument as you will see of diffusing the falsehood throughout Europe.

## LETTER V.

OF a charge so extensively circulated and so long maintained, as that alluded to in the close of my last letter, it is worth while to examine the foundation, especially as the station of its author and the character of its objects, both tend to give it importance; and as on its truth or falsehood, the moral colouring of our national history must greatly depend.

By reference to the *Anas*, at the end of his fourth volume, it appears that in the year 1818, Mr. Jefferson revised all the imputations he had made or collected against this illustrious body of his countrymen, and therein it will be found he repeats, in the most imposing form he could give it, this particular slander. (447, 8, 9.) In regard to the former branch of it, the making no discrimination between the first and last holders of government stock, he affirms that it was a stratagem devised by Hamilton to gratify speculators, and to attach to himself a band of mercenary supporters who were to be his instruments in overturning the republic. In proof of this affirmation he proceeds as follows—"When the trial of strength on these several efforts had indicated the form in which the bill would finally pass, this being known within doors sooner than without, and especially than to those who were in distant parts of the Union, the base scramble began. Couriers and relay horses by land, and swift-sailing pilot boats by sea, were flying in all directions. Active partners and agents were associated and employed in every state, town and country neighbourhood, and this paper was bought up at five shillings, and even as low as two shillings in the pound, before the holder knew that congress had already provided for its redemption at par. Immense sums were filched from the poor and ignorant, and fortunes accumulated by those who had themselves been poor enough before. Men thus enriched by the dexterity of a leader, would follow of course, the chief who was leading them to fortune, and become the zealous instruments of all his enterprises.

Let it be remembered that among the principal objects of reconstructing the form of the federal government was that of enabling the people of the United States to discharge the debt they had contracted in the war of Independence;\* that the initiation of a plan for the accomplishment of this object was imposed, both by the nature of his office and a resolution of Congress, on the Secretary of the Treasury; and does it seem consistent with common justice,

\* See Gen. Washington's letter to the governors of the several States. (*Marshall, Vol. V. p. 48.*)

to impute to corrupt motives, to motives that would have made a Catiline or an Arnold blush, any speculative ill consequences that might be predicated of a system thus exacted, which was original in its theory, and complex in its effects? Can any man of sense, who, with the greatest possible admiration for Mr. Jefferson, retains the smallest respect for justice, approve the illiberal construction he puts on the labours of a colleague, whose patriotism had been long and meritoriously displayed; or upon the character of those able men, who concurred in his views, or were convinced by his arguments? Was it not natural, nay almost inevitable, that some errors should either be discovered or suspected, in *any* plan that could have been proposed; and was it the part of a wise or an honest man, to ascribe them, not to the imperfection of reason, but to treasonable intentions; to lay in wait, while Hamilton was tasking the powers of his creative mind, in order to discharge an important duty, that he might denounce the appearances of error, as evidences of guilt.

As it is morally impossible to look upon such a proceeding without that indignation which the foulest injustice excites, so it is beyond the compass of human credulity to believe that a man of Mr. Jefferson's understanding, really entertained the suspicions he expressed on this subject. Besides their incongruity with the characters of the men on whom they bear, the chain of inference by which they are attempted to be upheld, is too lax and absurd to be conscientiously relied on by any reflecting mind. The mere fact of rejecting the discrimination is made proof of corruption, in the enlightened statesman who carried that rejection. But were there not on the very surface of that proposition fair and forcible objections it? Would it not have interfered violently with private contracts, placed the government despotically between the buyer and the seller, been in the nature of an *ex-post-facto* law, and converted the transaction, arbitrarily, from a *purchase* into a *loan*; wresting from the purchaser the result of his risk, the degree of which was represented by the depreciation of the paper? Would not such a plan, independently of its repugnance to our system of laws, and habits of dealing; its inconvenience and almost impracticability, have been in the teeth of a maxim of trade that was admitted before Mr. Jefferson's time?

“The real value of a thing,  
Is just as much as it will bring.”

Again.—The facts by which he attempts to corroborate this odious inference, if admitted, really destroy it; rendering his argument as vicious as his calumny. If we believe him, when the supporters of Hamilton's system discovered that the bill would pass without the discriminating clause they despatched couriers, expresses, and swift-sailing packets, to every State, town, and county in the Union; devoured the roads, and vexed the seas; associated

partners and employed agents in every neighbourhood, in order to buy up this paper at a great discount. This operation must have created instantaneously, a general and pressing demand for it, and have raised its price to the level of that demand. In the nature of things, the speculation, consequently, must either have been inconsiderable in extent, or inconsiderable in profit; so that if it be possible to sympathise with his Irish outcry against those cruel and ingenious federalists, who discovered the mode of "filching immense fortunes from the poor," it will be difficult not to perceive the injustice of his accusation through the fallacy of his reasoning.

Besides he and his friends in Congress had a newspaper at their command; through its columns, and by private letters, they could have apprised the public of the progress and probable event of the bill. That they did not do so, places Mr. Jefferson at least in the dilemma, of having either perceived no ground for his imputation, or of being subject to the suspicion which he erects upon it.

To reinforce this charge of a design in Hamilton to establish a monarchy upon the ruins of the Constitution, and of a corrupt instrumentality in it, on the part of the other leading friends of Gen. Washington, he adduces with equal confidence, the assumption of the State debts. It being unnecessary to discuss an obvious absurdity, I beg to remind you that I confine my remarks to the object of proving the impossibility of Mr. Jefferson's believing his own accusations. In this case, he knew that it had been demonstrated, and was at all times and places demonstrable, that the debts of the States had been contracted for national purposes; that the greater the debt of any particular State, the greater had been its exertion, and exposure in the common cause; and that the principles of agency, applied in favour of the States. This reasoning was not only conclusive to his judgment, but the equity of it was familiar to his memory, as appears from the following letter, of the 15th December, 1780; which, when governor of Virginia, he wrote to Gen. Washington, (Vol. I. pp. 198, 199.)

"From intelligence received, we have reason to expect that a confederacy of British and Indians, to the amount of two thousand men, is formed, for the purpose of spreading destruction and dismay through the whole extent of our frontier, in the ensuing spring. Should this take place, we shall certainly lose in the south all the aids of militia from beyond the Blue Ridge, besides the inhabitants who must fall a sacrifice in the course of the savage irruptions. There seems to be but one method of preventing this, which is, to give the western enemy employment in their own country. The regular force Col. Clarke already has, with a proper draft from the militia beyond the Alleghany, and that of three or four of our most northern counties, will be adequate to the reduction of Fort Detroit, in the opinion of Col. Clarke; and he assigns the most probable reasons for that opinion. We have, therefore, determined to undertake it, and commit it to his direc-

*tion. Whether the expense of the enterprise shall be defrayed by the Continent or State, we will leave to be decided hereafter, by Congress, in whose justice we can confide, as to the determination."* This extract covers every point in the assumption; shows the general advantage resulting from the enterprises of individual States; and the recognised equity of charging their pecuniary expense to the Union. As Hamilton's report was necessarily submitted to the President, and referred to the Cabinet, before it was transmitted to Congress, there is abundant reason to believe, that this very claim of Virginia furnished one of the motives which determined the mind of the Executive, both in the formation and sanction of this financial measure; and that Mr. Jefferson here censures as corrupt and treasonable, a proceeding, which he had proposed as governor of Virginia, and approved as Secretary of State.

It is useless to pursue any farther his absurdities and injustice in regard to this fair and beneficial measure, by referring to the assumption of the State debts, growing out of the late war, or to his zeal in favour of securing that of Virginia, (Vol. IV. p. 411.) But it is wonderful to think what a superstructure of popularity-giving slander he reared on them. Like the Arabian impostor, he seems to have determined to storm the understanding of his followers by the boldness of his leading fictions; so that when once the gates of doubt were forced open, entrance for all future fallacies was secure. Their zeal was completely enlisted as soon as they were brought to believe that his opponents were necessarily enemies of freedom. And this infatuation, which opened a spacious avenue for countless and cruel suspicions—

“That with extended wings, a bannered host,  
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through,  
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array,”

was strengthened by the consideration, that in consequence of dividing the country into two castes, the worthy, and the unworthy of office, the fund of emolument and place, with which to reward his proselytes would be augmented. It followed, as a matter of course, that the fame and popularity of Washington were overshadowed by that of Jefferson; that Hamilton, Jay, Marshall, and Knox, gave place in public estimation, to Madison, Monroe, Gallatin and Dearborne; that men of all classes, especially the revolutionary officers, who retained or expressed veneration for the father of their country, were denounced as traitors, stigmatised as Englishmen, and declared unfit for any public trust; and that the eastern States, Massachusetts particularly, “the cradle of the revolution,” were pronounced to be British Provinces.\*

\* Speaking of the Federalists of Massachusetts, Mr. Jefferson wrote to Gen. Dearborne, in August, 1811, (Vol. IV. p. 166,) as follows: “Tell my old friend, governor Gerry, that I give him glory for the rasping, with which he

At length when Mr. Jefferson's peculiar calumnies were likely to lose force by repetition, a market for new ones was opened. This, getting wind, it was soon scented by the office-and-salary-loving John Quincy Adams. He immediately prepared a bundle of treasons and carried them under his cloak to the President, to catch whose eye he labelled one in large letters HAMILTON. The President (Jefferson) says (Vol. IV. p. 419,) he received them with "awe," and the informer no doubt presented them with solemnity. The substance of the transaction that ensued was that "for and in consideration" of Mr. Adams' asserting that the leading men of his own State, with whom he and his father had long been associated in habits of personal and political friendship, were engaged, originally under the auspices of Alexander Hamilton, in forming a treasonable connexion with England, he was declared upon sufficient authority to be to all intents and purposes, a Jeffersonian Republican, to be worthy of the President's confidence, and of public office—was made first, the leader of the administration party in the Senate, next Minister to Russia, and in due time to London.

His speculation turning out so well, Henry, an Irish adventurer, in connexion with a French impostor who styled himself *Le Comte de Crillon*, repaired to Washington about the beginning of the last war, and informed the President (Madison) that the same federalists of Massachusetts had not quite completed their traitorous alliance with England, but were at that moment engaged in negotiating through him with the Canadian and British governments. Notwithstanding that Henry's disclosure bore a mercenary brand on its front, and that the French minister refused to receive the soi-disant Count, our President received and entertained the Count

rubbed down his herd of traitors. Let them have justice, and protection against personal violence, but no favour. Powers and pre-eminentes conferred on them, are daggers put into the hands of assassins, to be plunged into our own bosoms, the moment the thrust can go home to the heart. Moderation can never reclaim them. They deem it timidity, and despise without fearing the tameness from which it flows. Backed by England, they never lose the hope that their day is to come, when the terrorism of their earlier power is to be merged in the more gratifying system of deportation and the guillotine. Being now '*hors de combat*' myself, I resign these cares to others."

The ferocity of these sentiments is equalled only by the vulgarity of the language, and the tyrannical temper which they disclose. To the freemen of a sister State, whose rights were ascertained and consecrated by laws of their own making, and who contributed both to the emolument and the dignity of the high office, which for eight years he had filled, he advises governor Gerry, and Gen. Dearborne, to grant justice, and protection against personal violence. That is, do not mob or murder them; do not take away violently their property or their lives, as our friends in Baltimore have been doing, and countenancing lately.

It is no easy matter to determine whether it was more disgraceful to have perpetrated the writing, or accepted the intimacy, or provoked the praise of this letter; which separated from the names attached to it, might be mistaken for the brutal and frantic ribaldry of one West India slave driver to another.

at least; and Henry modestly preferring cash to office, was paid out of funds belonging to the people of the United States, fifty thousand dollars, for a slander on a part of them, which slander Mr. John Q. Adams had sold before.

Incidental to Hamilton's system of finance, was, as has been mentioned, a proposition to establish a National Bank which was opposed by Mr. Madison as unconstitutional;\* and reprobated by Mr. Jefferson as a part of Hamilton's monarchical scheme. I notice this merely to refer to the well known fact that after Mr. Madison became President he approved a law for the establishment of a National Bank on similar principles, and with a capital of thirty instead of ten millions of dollars. With equal inconsistency Mr. Jefferson who denied, throughout, the constitutional power of the General Government to construct a road or canal through either or any of the States, sanctioned as President, a law for the construction of the Cumberland road, which runs through the territory of three States.

In relation to fiscal measures, and the funding system particularly, his opinions were equally contradictory, proceeding always from the veering suggestions of interest, and never from the steady influence of principle. In 1798, when he was endeavouring to supplant President Adams, by whose administration upon the apprehension of a war with France, a small loan was contracted, he wrote to Col. Taylor, (Vol. III. p. 404.) "I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to the Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the general principles of the Constitution. I mean an additional article taking from the federal government the power of borrowing." In 1815 he writes to Mr. Monroe, "We seem equally incorrigible in our financial course. Although a century of British experience has proved to what a wonderful extent the funding, or specific redeeming, taxes enables a government to anticipate in war the resources of peace, and although the other nations of Europe have tried and trodden every path of force or folly in fruitless quest of the same object, yet we still expect to find in juggling tricks and banking dreams, that money can be made out of nothing, and in sufficient quantity to meet the expenses of a war by sea and land. It is said indeed that money cannot be borrowed from our merchants as from those of England. But it can be borrowed from our people. They will give you all the necessaries of war they produce, if instead of the bankrupt trash they now are obliged to receive for want of any other, you will give them a paper promise, founded on a specific pledge, and of a size fitted for circulation."† Now I am far from denying the pro-

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 294.

† *The bankrupt trash*, means the paper of the State and private banks—the old United States Bank of Hamilton having then wound up its operations in conformity with the limitation of its charter, and the new one of Madison, not having been as yet incorporated.

priety of any man's changing his opinions whenever experience or reflection shall convince him of their error, whether it be in the art of healing or destroying, or governing men, whether the man be a physician, a general, or a statesman. But assuredly, if in this process he adopts an opinion, which, when advanced by others he had declared to be fraught with public injury and demonstrative of atrocious designs, he ought either to retract the imputation, or to confess the justice of its application to himself. Neither of these manly steps was taken by the statesmen in question; one preserving silence, the other persisting in abuse.

There are other of Mr. Jefferson's letters recognising the right and prudence of the funding system, in regard to the financial emergencies of our federal government, as for example (Vol. II. p. 383,) to Mr. Madison. But the most characteristic of the fiscal rhapsodies, with which his volumes abound, is in a letter to the same fraternal politician and correspondent, (Vol. III. p. 27,) proving as its author affirms, that one generation of men, has no right to contract debts which another must pay—and consequently that the validity of an obligation of that sort is to be ascertained not by its terms or the general principles of justice, but by reference to bills of mortality, in order to see if a majority of the contracting generation has died off; and the obligation to pay, has been extinguished with it. Upon this luminous and substantial principle, the longer a government defers the payment of its debts, the less the obligation to satisfy their creditors becomes, and of course as the generous La Fayette had been left unrequited for his pecuniary sacrifices in support of our independence for a term longer than the average existence of the majority of a generation after it has reached the age of discretion—that is, has attained the legal capacity to borrow—our government transgressed both right and justice in acknowledging his unasserted claim, and making provision for it. This singular theory is so exuberantly fallacious, so arborescently absurd, that it well deserves a closer examination than I can afford to bestow on it.\*

With regard to the monstrous inconsistencies of these States-

[\* The heresy here condemned was more than a "fiscal rhapsody." Mr. Jefferson maintains further, that "every law and even constitution, naturally expires at the end of this term," (19 years,) as the reader will find in Mr. Tucker's Life, Vol. I. p. 291, and be surprised, too, to find that the biographer discovers the origin of this opinion in his hero's "ever active spirit of benevolence." Nor is it carelessly broached, but earnestly recommended to Mr. Madison's attention, who in a long and laborious reply cautiously resists it, "as not *in all respects* compatible with the course of human affairs."

But a more instructive reference of the reader will be to a paragraph in Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution, (p. 111,) where he will see that in the opinion of that great man, "By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer."]

men, it may be observed that as their plan when out of power, was to decry every measure of the party in power, not with a view of putting them right, but of putting them *out*, it occurred naturally that they were often, after they succeeded, obliged to adopt the very proceedings they had denounced. This dilemma is illustrated, while it explains it, by the apparent inconsistency of that non-descript debater John Randolph, in vilifying both parties. The measures which he had concurred with Messrs. Jefferson and Madison in reprobating in the federal administration, he differed from them by denouncing when sanctioned by their own; and his error was either that he did not examine, or was incapable of judging whether in the first case, the measure was right or wrong. Fallacies which he was betrayed into by passion, and adhered to through obstinacy, his leaders broached from interest and abandoned from calculation, and while conscious of the substantial sin of injustice, they drowned his eloquent invectives, in a shower of reproaches for the equivocal fault of inconsistency—for varying from their own inconstant standard.

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## LETTER VI.

THE course of Mr. Jefferson's correspondence next leads us to his famous letter to Mazzei, which, in a futile attempt to explain it, he denominates (Vol. IV. p. 401,) "a precious theme of federal crimination." It bears date less than two months anterior to that in which he assures Gen. Washington of his total abstraction from party politics, and reviles Gen. Lee so bitterly for having intimated a doubt of the sincerity of this avowal. Being connected with a strenuous effort in 1797, to mask one of its bearings, and with an *abstract attempt* in 1824, to parry another, it extends to two distinct eras, both as it regards Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson himself. To the former it refers both before and after his death, to his envied popularity, and his unsullied renown; to the latter, while intent upon the acquisition of power; and after that had been enjoyed and resigned, when covetous of fame. You will therefore perceive that the task of detecting its true meaning, (and of exposing the objects with which it was written) if not likely to require ability in a writer, will demand of the reader patient attention.

As it appears in his "Writings," this letter, so far as it relates to public matters, is in the following words, (Vol. III. p. 327.)

*"Monticello, April 24th, 1796.*

"**MY DEAR FRIEND,**—The aspect of our politics has wonderfully changed since you left us. In place of that noble love of liberty and republican government which carried us triumphantly through the war, an Anglican, monarchical, and aristocratical party has sprung up, whose avowed object is to draw over us the substance, as they have already done the forms of the British government. The main body of our citizens, however, remain true to their republican principles; the whole landed interest is republican, and so is a great mass of talents. Against us are the executive, the judiciary, two out of three branches of the legislature, all the officers of the government, all who want to be officers, all timid men who prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty, British merchants, and Americans trading on British capitals, speculators, and holders in the banks and public funds, a contrivance invented for purposes of corruption, and for assimilating us in all things to the rotten as well as the sound parts of the British model. It would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to these heresies, men who were Samsons in the field, and Solomons in the council, but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot of England. In short, we are likely to preserve the liberty we have gained only by unremitting labours and perils. But we shall preserve it; and our mass of weight and wealth on the good side is so great as to leave no danger that force will ever be attempted against us. We have only to awake and snap the Lilliputian cords with which they have been entangling us during the first sleep which succeeded our labours."

This letter, or rather this part of it, was translated into Italian, and published by Mazzei in a Gazette of Florence. In Paris, it was republished in the *Moniteur* in a French version of Mazzei's translation, with editorial remarks adapted to its sentiments, tending to show the faithless spirit of our government towards France, the strength of the Gallican party in the United States, and the justice as well as the policy of the hostile measures pursued by the directory towards us. From the *Moniteur* it was transferred to the English papers, after undergoing a retranslation, and in this last dress found its way to the United States. Although it bore no signature it was immediately imputed to Mr. Jefferson, a circumstance which occasioned his favouring Mr. Madison with the following eager explanation of it, (Vol. III. p. 362.)

*"Monticello, August 3d, 1797.*

"I SCRIBBLED you a line on the 24th ult., it missed of the post, and so went by a private hand. I perceive from yours by Mr. Bringhurst that you had not received it. In fact, it was only an earnest exhortation to come here with Monroe, which I still hope you will do. In the mean time I enclose you a letter from him,

and wish your opinion on its principal subject. The variety of other topics the day I was with you, kept out of sight the letter to Mazzei imputed to me in the papers, the general substance of which is mine, though the diction has been considerably altered and varied in the course of its translations from English into Italian, from Italian into French, and from French into English. I first met with it at Bladensburg, and for a moment conceived I must take the field of the public papers. I could not disavow it wholly, because the greatest part was mine in substance, though not in form. I could not avow it as it stood, because the form was not mine, and in one place the substance very materially falsified. This, then, would render explanations necessary; nay, it would render proofs of the whole necessary, and draw me at length into a publication of all (even the secret) transactions of the cabinet while I was of it; and embroil me personally with every member of the executive, with the judiciary, and with others still. I soon decided in my own mind to be entirely silent. I consulted with several friends at Philadelphia, who, every one of them, were clearly against my avowing or disavowing, and some of them conjured me most earnestly to let nothing provoke me to it. I corrected, in conversation with them, a substantial misrepresentation of the copy published. The original has a sentiment like this, (for I have it not before me) 'they are endeavouring to submit us to the substance, as they already have to the *forms* of the British government,' meaning by *forms* the birth-days, levées, processions to Parliament, inauguration pomposities, &c. But the copy published says, 'as they have already submitted us to the *form* of the British,' &c.; making me express hostility to the form of our government, that is, to the constitution itself. For this is really the difference of the word *form*, used in the singular or plural, in that phrase in the English language. Now it would be impossible for me to explain this publicly, without bringing on a personal difference between Gen. Washington and myself, which nothing before the publication of this letter has ever done. It would embroil me too, with all those with whom his character is still popular, that is, with nine-tenths of the people of the United States; and what good would be obtained by avowing the letter with the necessary explanations? Very little, indeed, in my opinion, to counterbalance a good deal of harm. From my silence in this instance, it cannot be inferred that I am afraid to own the general sentiments of the letter. If I am subject to either imputation, it is to that of avowing such sentiments too frankly both in private and public, often when there is no necessity for it, merely because I disdain every thing like duplicity. Still, however, I am open to conviction. Think for me on the occasion, and advise me what to do, and confer with Col. Monroe on the subject. Let me entreat you again to come with him; there are other important things to consult upon."

The explanation here advanced is evidently designed to impose

on Mr. Madison, and therefore is naturally at variance with that subsequently furnished to Mr. Van Buren—the object of which was to delude him into the belief that Gen. Washington had never taken exception to the letter to Mazzei, and that assertions to that effect, were the false effusions “of federal malice.”

The design upon Mr. Madison was a double one; first, to reconcile him to the unmanliness of preferring an evasive silence, to an open avowal or fair explanation of the letter; second, to conceal from him, if possible, the obvious application of its censure to himself. As this latter application had a tendency to wound the delicacy of his self-love, it is dexterously covered by the former part of his design, and by that stratagem is made to appear as if it were intended solely to answer their mutual purpose, of avoiding an open rupture with Gen. Washington. In furtherance of this scheme, Mr. Madison is assured that in consequence of mutilations which successive translations had produced in the text of the letter to Mazzei, Mr. Jefferson could not disavow it wholly with truth, nor avow it wholly without explanations; which explanations “would embroil him personally with every member of the executive, with the judiciary, and with others;” that consequently he decided very soon in his own mind to remain perfectly silent; and that certain nameless friends, whom he consulted in Philadelphia, were clear and earnest for his persisting in this equivocal silence. Mentioning then, that he had corrected in conversation with these frank and worthy persons, a substantial error in the copy, he shuffles down with a sort of brazen confusion, to the point of the slander which was pressing against Mr. Madison’s reputation; and keeping that confederate’s eyes upturned all the while to the indignant countenance of Gen. Washington, slips out the following card of deception:—“The original has a sentiment like this, (for I have it not before me,) ‘they are endeavouring to submit us to the substance as they already have to the *forms* of the British Government,’ meaning by *forms*, the birth-days, levées, processions to Parliament, inauguration pomposities, &c. But the copy published says, ‘as they have already submitted us to the *form* of the British,’ &c., making me express hostility to the form of our Government, that is to the Constitution itself. For this is really the difference of the word *form*, in the singular or plural, in that phrase, in the English language.”

As Mr. Jefferson made this exposition, confessedly on the strength of his memory, and not from a collation of the copy with the original, I shall take the liberty of suggesting that he was mistaken in point of fact; that the word used in the letter to Mazzei, was *form*. His hand writing was remarkably neat, plain, and correct, as is known to his numerous correspondents, and appears by the *fac-simile* at the end of his fourth volume; and Mazzei, from their intimacy and correspondence, was familiar with it. The probability is, that in a letter which this person thought, or was

induced to consider, of sufficient importance to be published in the Florence Gazette, he would be careful to see that no error was committed in its translation or publication; and it having been accurately printed in Italian, a subsequent error of the kind insisted on, was almost impossible. For in the French language, as in the Italian, the difference between the singular and the plural in nouns, is marked by a change in the termination of two words, that is the article and the noun; as for example—in Italian *la forma*, singular, is *le forme* plural; and in French, *la forme* singular, is *les formes* plural. Whereas in English, the change is confined to one word, and consists solely in the absence or presence of the *s* final. Thus, if Mr. Jefferson had written *forms*, the care of Mazzei, would have ensured the appearance in the Florence Gazette, of the phrase *le forme*, which the structure of the French and Italian languages would have forced the Moniteur to represent by *les formes*; a noun that the English translator would of necessity, have known to be plural, and would have so rendered. From these intrinsic evidences, it is highly improbable, to say the least, that if Mr. Jefferson wrote the word in the plural, it should have been altered in the series of translations into the singular.

But considering it in another point of view, if this alteration did actually happen, as he affirms, "in the course of its translations from English into Italian, from Italian into French, and from French into English," it only proves that the person who made the alteration, considered it, as every body else will probably do, immaterial, deeming the two phrases *form of government*, and *forms of government*, equivalent; and that the use of the one or the other, made no change whatever in the meaning. Thus a sort of dilemma arises at the threshhold of his explanation, and seems to shake its horns at this assertion of Mr. Jefferson, making it either erroneous or idle. If the error of version be not unlikely, the equivalent construction put upon the phrases by the peasant translator, becomes highly probable; and if this construction is considered unnatural, the error of translation is scarcely possible.

But can it be seriously supposed by the most ignorant, or by the most learned man, that Mazzei, or any one else in Europe or America, could understand by the phrase, *forms of the British government*, the King's birth-night balls, the Queen's levées, processions to parliament, or ceremonies of the Coronation? Does Montesquieu, in his analysis, or De Lolme, in his description of the English Constitution, *allude*, even to these *forms*? Was the mind of Pope, when he wrote the oft-repeated line,

"For *forms of government* let fools contest,"

inspired by levées, birth-nights, and processions? After the alleged transplantation of these ceremonies in America, did they become *forms of our government*, of a government which exists solely in our written constitution. When Mr. Jefferson, on becoming Presi-

dent, announced to Mr. Macon the heads of the reformation he proposed to introduce, and commenced the list with "Levées are done away," could the venerable senator from North Carolina, have understood that a certain *form* of our government was to be abolished? Are the Washington birth-night balls, which still annually recur in the towns and villages of the United States, *forms* of the federal or state governments? Were the weekly levées of Mrs. Madison and Mrs. Monroe *forms* of political or petticoat government? Or was the custom adopted by Gen. Washington of opening each session of Congress with a speech, instead of a message, when he was attended by a voluntary concourse of his fellow-citizens, a *form of the British government*, "drawn over" the people of the United States?

The truth is, that as a message is nothing more nor less than a written speech, and as the Kings of England open the sessions of Parliament by commission, more frequently than in person, Mr. Jefferson's custom was of a more regal *form* than Gen. Washington's, was less consistent with the frank and open carriage of a republican officer, less respectful to the legislative bodies, and consequently to the people and the States whom they represented.

On the other hand, the *forms* of the British government have universally been understood to mean its division into legislative, executive, and judiciary departments; the unity of its executive; the duality of its legislature, and the independence of its judiciary. These *forms* were imitated with more or less exactness, as they appeared conducive to the *substance* of freedom, in the constitution of the United States, as may be seen by reference to the compact itself, and to the essays of Mr. Madison expounding it; and were unquestionably the subject of Mr. Jefferson's remark whether he used the word in the singular or the plural.

Mr. Jefferson, in a letter to John Dickinson (Vol. III. p. 487,) in reference to the objects of the revolution, says—"Surely we had in view to obtain a theory and practice of good government; and how any, who seemed so ardent in this pursuit, could as shamelessly have apostatised, and supposed we meant only to put our government into other hands, but not other forms, is indeed wonderful." Now here this word *forms* is used in the plural and in connexion with the word *government*; yet it cannot be forced by any construction into the meaning of "birth-days, levées or processions to parliament," which Mr. Jefferson assures his friend Mr. Madison, it always bore "in that phrase in the English language."

Thus it appears, that if we examine into the effect of the various translations of this letter, we are led to believe that Mr. Jefferson used the word *form* in the singular, in opposition to *substance* in the previous member of the sentence; and that, if out of courtesy, we admit his assertion to the contrary, we discover that the alteration of the text, which he insists on, would make not the least

possible difference in his meaning. The conclusion therefore is, even from these premises, that this eager explanation to Mr. Madison, was factitious and fraudulent, intended not so much to consult as to mislead his judgment, and to prevent his taking offence at finding himself classed with the members of the "Anglican, monarchical, and aristocratical party," which had "sprung up" in the United States. For the natural import of the language, whether the word *form* or *forms* be employed, is, that those persons who had drawn over us the *forms* of the British government, that is the framers of our constitution, had combined into an Anglican, monarchical, and aristocratical party, and were trying to draw over us also its *substance*, that is, its corruption, its executive patronage, its privileged classes, its sinecures and hereditary tenure of office. Now, as Mr. Madison's popularity and public reputation were founded on his exertions and influence in devising the *forms* of our government, (not birth-night balls, levées, &c.) and in recommending their adoption to the people, the inference, that he was implicated in the slander entrusted to Mazzei, is irresistible.

You may ask if this explanation be so shallow and preposterous, how Mr. Jefferson could venture to offer, or succeed in imposing it, on a person of Mr. Madison's scholastic and practical acquaintance with our language. The answer is that Mr. Madison had been accustomed to be deceived by him, and in this case would be willing to be imposed on. Mithridates took poison so often, that at last, the most deadly and active substances would produce no disturbance in his stomach; and it is easy to comprehend how reluctant Mr. Madison would be on the occasion in question to doubt the personal friendship or to lose the political alliance of Mr. Jefferson. The latter had therefore in his favour the power of habit and the influence of self-love; agents of force enough to bias the strongest understanding. Besides, the offensive meaning of the sentence, was rendered less obvious than it might have been, by Mr. Jefferson's declining to enclose the genuine letter, though he was then at Monticello, that great mint of *press copies*, where, as you may remember, one was readily coined to appease the apprehended resentment of Col. Burr, and where, as we shall presently see, another was *struck* twenty-seven years subsequently to bewilder the credulity of Mr. Van Buren. Instead of sending him a faithful copy of his letter, he refers him to one from Mr. Monroe, and persuades him to a conference with that gentleman, who as he had borne no part in the formation of the constitution and but an immaterial one in its adoption,\* (Vol. II. p. 367,) might be the more easily employed to decoy Mr. Madison into security as to himself, and into apprehension as to the effect which an avowal or explanation of the letter would have on Mr. Jefferson, and through him on the interests of the whole party.

\* See Robertson's Debates of the Virginia convention.

To mislead Mr. Madison still further, he avers that the sentence, by its alleged alteration, would make him “express hostility to the form of our government, that is to the constitution itself”—whereas, if Mr. Madison had seen the letter itself, he would have perceived that it could produce no such effect—for certainly to say that the form of the Federal government resembles that of Great Britain—which was admitted on all hands, to be the best in existence before ours was created, and to which it is related by such strong and numerous analogies, cannot be interpreted into an expression of hostility to the constitution of the United States, without going to the absurdity of imputing that sentiment to the fathers of our charter. This superfluous defence shows that it was the language he concealed from Mr. Madison, not that which he repeated to him, his conscience and not his communication, which on this occasion was his accuser. For his letter to Mazzei, as now published, does most certainly “express hostility to the Constitution itself,” as well as to its framers.

But this chicanery, contemptible as it is, is not the worst part of the letter to Mr. Madison. For after admitting the letter to Mazzei to be in substance his, Mr. Jefferson expresses his determination, neither to avow, nor disavow, nor explain it, for fear of its bringing on a personal difference between himself and Gen. Washington, and embroiling him with other distinguished men. He said to Mr. Madison as he had said to Mr. Monroe. *I have written a letter to Mazzei, of a character to wound the feelings of Gen. Washington and several other gentlemen. Contrary to my expectation, it is published in the American newspapers, fortunately without my signature, but in substance as I wrote it, though with the alteration of one word, which I think changes its meaning in one respect, but which neither increases nor lessens the personal offence it is likely to give. I cannot avow it wholly because of this alteration, nor disavow it altogether because of its substantial accuracy, nor explain its alterations without bringing on a personal difference with Gen. Washington, and embroiling me with these other eminent persons. I am therefore decided in my own mind, neither to avow, nor to disavow, nor to explain it: and by this silence to avoid the personal responsibility to which it would subject me, as well as the serious harm it would occasion to my own popularity and our mutual political plans. I am anxious to get your advice on the subject, and I hope, that, after consulting with Monroe, you will approve, like my honest friends in Philadelphia, this prudent and evasive silence.*

Here, if we trust the indications of Mr. Jefferson's correspondence, are three citizens who were destined to rise in succession to the highest place in the popular affection and political power of a great republic—in a government, the essential principle of which is virtue,\* consulting together on a point of conduct upon which

\* Montesquieu. *Esprit des Lois*, liv. 3. chap. 3.

no man of honesty can possibly doubt, and, as far as appears, finally adopting a proceeding which no man of honour can approve. Is it possible to believe that Gen. Washington ever could have shrunk into such ignominious evasion? Or can the utmost stretch of the imagination conceive him consulting urgently and secretly with Gen. Hamilton and Gen. Lee, upon a step, of which the vast departure from manliness and honour, no language can describe? If there exist a being who can suppose so great an improbability, let him refer to the undisputed fact that arose out of the resignation of Edmund Randolph as Secretary of State. That gentleman—"for the purpose\* as he alleged of vindicating his conduct, demanded the sight of a confidential letter which had been addressed to him by the President, and which was left in the office. His avowed design was to give this as well as some others of the same description to the public in order to support the allegation, that in consequence of his attachment to France and to liberty, he had fallen a victim to the intrigues of a British and aristocratic party." To this demand Washington replied—"I have directed that you have the inspection of my letter of the 22nd of July, agreeably to your request, and you are at full liberty to publish, without reserve, *any* and *every* private and confidential letter I ever wrote *you*. Nay more, every word I ever uttered to or in your presence from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication."<sup>†</sup>

No contrast can be stronger than the difference between these proceedings—that of Washington displaying a consciousness of rectitude, a sense of magnanimity, and an ardent love of truth. To the admirers of Mr. Jefferson I leave the glorious task of portraying the virtues which on the occasion he exhibited. Let them reconcile his silence with the sentiments of his letter abusing Gen. Lee, his evasion with honour, his secrecy with truth, either with the spirit of an independent man, or the duty of a good citizen. Let them account for his conduct on any other hypothesis than that involving a consciousness of the injustice of his own aspersions; a fear of the exposure their avowal would "draw over" him personally and politically, in *substance* as well as in *form*; and an apprehension that besides this formidable array of enemies, it would be attended by the rupture of his alliance with Mr. Madison, and the consequent loss of this valuable auxiliary. For from the incompatibility between the tenor of his professions to Gen. Washington, and his communications to Mr. Madison, it was morally impossible that an explanation which would disarm Gen. Washington, should not offend Mr. Madison. While to a private one, therefore, he was averse, a public one he actually dreaded.

There is one sentence which brings us to the *zero* of pusillanimity—to a point of prevarication, at which Mr. Jefferson's moral

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 31, Notes.

† Marshall, ibid.

sense seems to have undergone congelation, and to have been attended by an instinctive assurance that a similar catastrophe had befallen his friends—a degree in the descending scale of dishonour at which shame and fear are actually transmuted into vanity and impudence. After this elaborate equivocation and dissembling, he exclaims—“From my silence in this instance, it cannot be inferred that I am afraid to own the general sentiments of the letter. If I am subject to either imputation, it is to that of avowing such sentiments too frankly both in private and public, often when there is no necessity for it, merely because I disdain every thing like duplicity.”!! And to be convinced that his love of truth was as sincere as his “disdain of every thing like duplicity,” you have only to remember that he assured Gen. Washington in his letter abusing Gen. Lee—which was written in the interval between the date of the letter to Mazzei and of this to Mr. Madison, “of his total abstraction from party politics”—that “political conversations he really disliked, and therefore avoided when he could without affectation—or unless they were urged by others.”\*

There yet remain to be considered in this explanation to Mr. Madison, two expressions, which will be found singularly significant. The first occurs in the following sentence—“Now it would be impossible for me to explain this publicly, without bringing on a personal difference between Gen. Washington and myself, *which nothing before the publication of this letter has ever done.*” Does not the conclusion of this sentence contain of itself a complete justification of Gen. Lee, out of Mr. Jefferson’s own mouth? What does it signify, but that although he was conscious of having, before this letter to Mazzei was published, given abundant cause to justify the personal resentment of Gen. Washington, it had as yet never been excited? What is it but telling Mr. Madison, that notwithstanding the many injurious and disparaging remarks, the numerous misrepresentations and calumnies in which he had ventured to indulge, and his correspondence and conversations with him and other “political friends and connexions,” he had hitherto managed to avoid a personal difference with Gen. Washington? If this be not the meaning of his words, they are destitute of meaning.

[\* And how is it possible that Gen. Lee could only hear of him through his conversations at his own table, when, according to his own account, a disdain of “every thing like duplicity” had subjected him to the imputation of avowing his sentiments “too frankly both in private and *public?*” Further, why would a public explanation, which would have limited, instead of extending, the censures expressed in the letter, have brought on a personal difference with Gen. Washington, when the habit of publicly avowing “such sentiments” had not involved him in that misfortune?

“O what a tangled web we weave  
When first we practice to deceive!”

is an exclamation the reader will find frequently forced upon him, while pursuing this Mazzei controversy.]

In the succeeding remark—"It would embroil me too with all those with whom his character is still popular, that is with nine-tenths of the people of the United States"—the adverb *still*, is as expressive as any single word can be. The "tandem liber equus" of Virgil, so much celebrated by commentators, yields to it in significance. It unclasps a volume of our national history which has as yet been very little read—it develops the spirit of the voluminous correspondence I have been examining, and casts a detecting light on the most obscure and invidious calumnies in Mr. Jefferson's innumerable letters to Messrs. Madison and Monroe. It now confesses to the world what it was then intended to hint to these two chosen confederates, that in spite of all his efforts to destroy the popularity of Gen. Washington, there was but too good reason to fear that a great majority of the people of the United States remained *still* devoted to him.

The truth is, however, that these efforts were not altogether unsuccessful. Gen. Washington did retire from office, and descended to his grave with a name which, though unsullied, was dimmed for a season by the slanders thus hatched by Mr. Jefferson, and thus confided to his compeers, and with a heart that was not agonized, only because the ethereal temper of virtue is impassive to the shafts of malice. This disinterested and devoted patriot was publicly threatened with impeachment, and reduced to the necessity of vindicating himself against an open charge of pecuniary corruption.\* And after laying down his office, he was condemned to learn that a leading member of Congress from his own State, had reproached him in debate with a want of wisdom and firmness, and rejoiced at his retirement as an event of national advantage.†

In the chicanery, slander, and ingratitude, disclosed by the examination of this part of Mr. Jefferson's career, was laid the foundation of that ascendancy which he gained in the United States, and transmitted to his successors, Messrs. Madison and Monroe,—an ascendancy, that has been ascribed to patriotism, wisdom and justice, by a fiction as gross in its nature, and as pardonable in its prevalence as that which induced the Romans to believe that they drew their lineage from the Gods.

The surviving partisans of Mr. Jefferson will not be proud of this political pedigree; but as it is traced distinctly through his own "Writings," has every link of its chain riveted by his own authority, it will require no little address to escape from its encumbrance. Mr. Madison, indeed, from the supereeminence of his reputation and talents, and the strict account that history is likely to take of his conduct, may feel himself called on by the publica-

\* Marshall, V. 637.

† Ibid. pp. 722-3. Mr. Giles more than thirty years after this debate took place, attempted for the first time, a disavowal of his speech—but in a manner that made no impression to his advantage on the public mind.

tion of Mr. Jefferson's side of their correspondence to declare, whether, or in what degree, he conspired in those schemes which projected the shadow of a "dim eclipse" between the glory of Washington and the admiration of his fellow-citizens; and which, while the lustre of his name shone unclouded in other lands, caused it, for a space, to shed but pale and struggling beams upon his native country.

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## LETTER VII.

It is now necessary to depart from the order of time observed in Mr. Jefferson's correspondence, and to transfer your attention to the explanation with which he was so kind as to drug Mr. Van Buren, twenty-seven years after he had administered to Mr. Madison the dose which has just been analysed.

The place and power to which at the earlier era Mr. Jefferson was aspiring, at the latter he had gained and enjoyed. The object of his care had therefore become apparent consistency, and of his ambition, posthumous fame. The reputation of Gen. Washington, canonized by death, had recovered from the effects of his arts and calumnies, and regained its natural pre-eminence in his country's affection. Despairing to rival Washington with posterity, he was content to seek the second place in fame, and praised that illustrious man when dead, from the same selfish motive, with which, when living, he had disparaged and traduced him.

The letter to Mr. Van Buren (29th June, 1824, Vol. IV. p. 399,) is too long for insertion. It appears to be in answer to one from that gentleman (then a Senator of the United States, from New York,) enclosing a publication of Mr. Pickering, which contained among other controversial matters, some remarks on this letter to Mazzei. The first passage that I shall notice is the following—"The other allegation respecting myself, is equally false. In page 34, Mr. Pickering quotes Dr. Stuart, as having twenty years ago informed him that Gen. Washington, 'when he became a private citizen,' called me to account for expressions in a letter to Mazzei, requiring in a tone of unusual severity an explanation of that letter. He adds of himself, 'in what manner the latter humbled himself, and appeased the just resentment of Washington, will never be known, as some time after his death, the correspondence was not to be found, and a diary for an important period of his presidency was also missing!' The diary being of transactions

during his presidency, the letter to Mazzei not known until some time *after he became a private citizen*, and the pretended correspondence of course after that, I know not why this lost diary and supposed correspondence are brought together here, unless for insinuations worthy of the letter itself. The correspondence could not be found, indeed, because it had never existed. I do affirm that there never passed a word, written or verbal, directly or indirectly, between Gen. Washington and myself on the subject of that letter. He would never have degraded himself so far as to take to himself the imputation in that letter on the 'Samsons in combat.' The whole story is a fabrication, and I defy the framers of it, and all mankind to produce the scrip of a pen between Gen. Washington and myself on the subject, or any other evidence more worthy of credit than the suspicions, suppositions, and presumptions of the two persons here quoting and quoted for it. With Dr. Stuart I had not much acquaintance. I supposed him to be an honest man, knew him to be a very weak one, and, like Mr. Pickering, very prone to antipathies, boiling with party passions, and under the dominion of these, readily welcoming fancies for facts. But come the story from whomsoever it might, it is an unqualified falsehood."

The assertion here attributed to Dr. Stuart, had been frequently repeated in Virginia, on other authority, as every one, acquainted with "the body of the time," will remember. As Mr. Pickering, however warm in his party feelings, was admitted on all hands, to be a man of truth, there is no reason to doubt that Dr. Stuart made the assertion; and you will be able to recollect that the statement made on Mr. Pickering's own authority—"added of himself"—respecting "the lost diary and supposed correspondence," was current in society, and credited by the friends of Gen. Washington, and by all who were familiar with those friends. If these, or such of them as survive should, as is probable, be led to recur to President Jefferson's unexpected appointment and remote relegation of Gen. Washington's secretary, events which corresponded in date with and were supposed to have proceeded from, the loss of this diary and correspondence; they will be apt to conclude that by the same instrumentality Mr. Jefferson acquired his occult but confident acquaintance with Gen. Lee's private letters to Gen. Washington.\*

As for Dr. Stuart, he was a man of excellent character—a gen-

[\* If the reader will bear in mind that Gen. Lee promised Gen. Washington not to mention to any one else the table conversation which he communicated by letter, and that it is highly improbable that Washington would have talked of it, the supposition that Mr. Jefferson had a secret informant in Gen. Washington's closet seems irresistible. This is further confirmed by a statement in the concluding part of the letter to Mr. Van Buren, that Gen. Washington was "copiously nourished with falsehoods by a neighbour of mine who ambitioned to be his correspondent." How should Mr. Jefferson know any thing of the contents of the letters of Mr. Nicholas (the neighbour alluded to) to Gen. Washington, unless he was clandestinely informed of them?]

tleman, of studious habits, inoffensive deportment, and good family. He married the widow of Mrs. Gen. Washington's son by her first husband; and becoming from this connexion intimate in the family, by his uniform integrity and irreproachable life, engaged, and preserved in a remarkable degree, Gen. Washington's confidence and friendship. A recorded proof of this traditional fact, may be found in Marshall's Life of Washington,\* and as the subject there treated forms one point in Mr. Jefferson's second explanation of this letter to Mazzei, the following quotations are doubly apposite. "Not long after the government came into operation, Dr. Stuart, a gentleman nearly connected with the President in friendship and by marriage, addressed to him a letter stating the accusations which were commonly circulating in Virginia on various subjects, and especially against the regal manners of those who administered the affairs of the nation." Gen. Washington's answer to this letter is succeeded by the following passage.† "In a subsequent letter written to the same gentleman, after his levées had been openly censured by the enemies of the administration, he thus expressed himself; "Before the custom was established which now accommodates foreign characters, strangers, and others, who from motives of curiosity, respect to the chief magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatever. For gentlemen, consulting their own convenience, rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast—often before—until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives; either to refuse them *altogether*, or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew be disgusting to many—the latter I expected, would undergo animadversion from those who would find fault, with or without cause. I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself. These visits are optional. They are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four, every Tuesday, I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go;—chat with each other and act as they please. A porter shows them into the room; and they return from it when they choose, and without ceremony. At their first entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this I am unable to discover."

These extracts, while they show the intimacy which subsisted between Gen. Washington and Dr. Stuart, afford an exact account of a social observance, which Mr. Jefferson distorts into a *form of government*, and of which his correction consisted in diminishing its frequency. For on New Year's day, the 4th of March, and the

\* Vol. V. p. 163.

† p. 165.

4th of July, he and his successors, besides the weekly levées of the Lady, have continued to hold these harmless *re-unions*.

His own positive denial of the statement derived by Mr. Pickering from Dr. Stuart, is attempted to be confirmed by positions, which although of no great force, tend rather to weaken it. He suggests that inasmuch as the ‘lost diary’ related to transactions *during* the presidency of Washington, and the ‘pretended correspondence’ could not have taken place until *after* his presidency, the mentioning these two subjects together, betrays malice and falsehood in the statement. Whereas, this apparent incongruity shows that the assertion was founded on facts either actual or supposed, and was not fabricated in a shape designed to slide it into credit—was not in fact prepared from a *press copy*. Political zeal which he ascribed in an equal degree to Dr. Stuart and Mr. Pickering, though it leads men to draw false inferences, is not supposed to make them mis-state facts. If that were the case, zeal *alone*, would be sufficient to discredit every assertion of Mr. Jefferson, in relation to the conduct of the federal party, not only in the letter under consideration, but in his four volumes.

If Dr. Stuart made the assertion at all, as we have every reason to believe from the nature of the circumstances connected with the subject of it, from the existence of an impression to that effect among the friends of Gen. Washington at the time, and from the positive and public declaration of a man of distinguished character and admitted veracity, it is impossible to conceive that in doing so, he “welcomed fancies for facts”—or dealt in “suspicions, suppositions, or presumptions.” He must have made a deliberate statement—which in the nature of things, must have been either positively true, or absolutely false. And Mr. Jefferson in treating it as a *fancy*, a *suspicion*, and a *supposition*, discovers how apprehensive he was of its force in a direct and tangible shape.

The next passage proper for consideration, respects the letter to Mazzei, and is as follows. “Now Gen. Washington perfectly understood what I meant by these forms, as they were frequent subjects of conversation between us. When, on my return from Europe, I joined the government in March, 1790, at New York, I was much astonished, indeed, at the mimicry I found established, of royal forms and ceremonies, and more alarmed at the unexpected phenomenon, by the monarchical sentiments I heard expressed and openly maintained in every company; and among others, by the high members of the government, executive and judiciary, (Gen. Washington alone excepted,) and by a great part of the legislature, save only some members who had been of the old congress, and a very few of recent introduction. I took occasion at various times, of expressing to Gen. Washington, my disappointment at these symptoms of a change of principle, and that I thought them encouraged by the forms and ceremonies which I found prevailing, not at all in character with the simplicity of republican govern-

ment, and looking as if wishfully to those of European courts. His general explanations were, that when he arrived at New York, to enter on the executive administration of the new government, he observed to those who were to assist him, that placed as he was in an office entirely new to him, unacquainted with the forms and ceremonies of other governments, still less apprised of those which might be properly established here, and himself perfectly indifferent to all forms, he wished them to consider and prescribe what they should be; and the task was assigned particularly to Gen. Knox, a man of parade, and to Col. Humphreys, who had resided some time at a foreign court. They, he said, were the authors of the present regulations, and that others were proposed so highly strained that he absolutely rejected them. Attentive to the difference of opinion prevailing on this subject, when the term of his second election arrived he called the heads of departments together; observed to them the situation in which he had been at the commencement of the government, the advice he had taken, and the course he had observed in compliance with it; that a proper occasion had now arrived of reviewing that course, of correcting in it any particulars, not approved by experience; and desired us to consult together, agree on any changes we should think for the better, and that he should willingly conform to what we should advise. We met at my office. Hamilton and myself agreed at once, that there was too much ceremony, for the character of our government; and particularly, that the parade of the installation at New York ought not to be copied on the present occasion, that the president should desire the chief justice to attend him at his chambers, that he should administer the oath of office to him in the presence of the higher officers of the government, and that the certificate of the fact should be delivered to the Secretary of State to be recorded. Randolph and Knox differed from us, the latter vehemently. They thought it not advisable to change any of the established forms; and we authorized Randolph to report our opinions to the President. As these opinions were divided, and no positive advice given as to any change, no change was made. Thus the forms which I had censured in my letter to Mazzei, were perfectly understood by Gen. Washington, and were those which he himself but barely tolerated. He had furnished me a proper occasion for proposing their reformation, and my opinion not prevailing, he knew I could not have meant any part of the censure for him."

These conversations—which are perfectly inconclusive in regard to the point for the maintenance of which they are adduced—if they ever took place, are probably misrepresented, for this among other reasons, that they are inconsistent with the statements of the principal interlocutors, upon the same subject. In the letter to Dr. Stuart which has been already cited, Gen. Washington declares that he found himself compelled by the incessant calls of visitors, “either to refuse them *altogether*, or to appropriate a time

for their reception." And that he adopted the latter branch of the alternative "because it combined public advantage with private convenience, and was in his own judgment unexceptionable." Here is nothing like a system formally pre-established, after a grave consultation with the officers of government, and a solemn reference to "men of parade." Its adoption was, evidently, neither sudden nor theoretical, but progressive and experimental, the result of his daily observation, and so far from being a compliance with the pompous predilections of others, was the deliberate choice of his own mind.

This account of the levées is irrefragable, since if it could be supposed possible that Gen. Washington could have been betrayed into a mis-statement of fact, the circumstances under which he was writing to Dr. Stuart were of a character to induce him, rather to attribute these obnoxious observances to the suggestions of others, than to his own determination.

As for Mr. Jefferson, in his introduction to the *Anas*, (Vol. IV. p. 446,) he carefully enumerates the circumstances in the political situation of the government which, at his arrival in New York at the very period in question, excited, as he says, his "wonder and mortification;" yet he makes not the most distant allusion to these levées, or to any conversation with the President respecting them. Again—this conversation is not reported in his diary, nor is the formal reference to the cabinet or meeting of its members at his office, noted in his memoranda; although for the month of November, 1793, "when the second term of Gen. Washington's election had arrived," seven long conferences, five different meetings at the President's, and one short, silly and slanderous memorandum are recorded.

Besides these various inconsistencies and contradictions, there is in his account to Mr. Van Buren, internal evidence of its being fabulous. He declares that as early as March, 1790, the principal persons in the government of the United States, in the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary—the very men, by the way, who had just been engaged in forming the Constitution, and prevailing on the nation to adopt it, were *in every company, open advocates for monarchy!* He excepts from this comprehensive attainder only Gen. Washington, who, as we have seen, was the avowed institutor of the terrible levées, "some members of the Legislature who had been of the old Congress and very few of recent introduction." Out of this small number of members of the old Congress, Adams, who was Vice-President, and Jay Chief justice, are to be taken: for he denounces them both repeatedly, as determined monarchists. So that nearly every citizen of eminence and power in the United States, was a decided and declared monarchist, in the course of one year after the establishment of the government, except Mr. Jefferson himself, who neither assisted in framing the republican government, under which we live, nor in

recommending it to the people, and who was far from approving its principal features. Can any man who recalls the names, and recollects the actions of these great patriots, believe this—or tell, if he believes Mr. Jefferson, what saved us from a monarchy?

He makes Gen. Washington, in explaining the origin of the levées, assign as their proximate cause, the facts of Gen. Knox being “a man of parade,” and Col. Humpheys having resided at a foreign court. If Gen. Washington, who was so delicately respectful to the character of others, can be supposed to have uttered such a remark about his particular friend Gen. Knox, it is too unsuitable to the occasion to be credited. For if he knew Gen. Knox to be “a man of parade,” and thought Col. Humpheys had become so from his residence at a foreign court, he must have known, that by submitting the question of “forms and ceremonies” to them, he was sure of having a pompous and high-toned system adopted. This would be saying to Mr. Jefferson, *I am indifferent about forms and ceremonies, and like you, prefer the most simple ones; but on settling a system for our government, I adopted the very means which I well knew would ensure the establishment of the most cumbersome and regal etiquette that the persons around me could devise.*

Further, in his intercourse with others, Gen. Washington was perfectly well-bred, dignified, and courteous. Is it then reasonable to suppose that in a conversation with Mr. Jefferson respecting a custom to which he himself was not friendly, and Mr. Jefferson was averse, he would trace it reproachfully to the fact of one of its authors having resided at a foreign court, when Mr. Jefferson had just returned from a long diplomatic residence at a foreign court, and from employment as minister to two of the most powerful monarchies in Europe. (Vol. II. p. 4.)

Again, after insisting that the levées, &c. were “monarchical forms of government,” and as such censurable and dangerous, he here says he represented them to the President as *ceremonies*, encouraging, on his part, *the monarchical sentiments openly and every where expressed, by the higher officers of every branch of the government*, and as contrary to the simplicity of republican institutions. And although he puts a long string of observations in the General’s mouth on these *ceremonies*, both in the letter to Mr. Van Buren and the introduction to the *Anas*, lie makes him say not a word about the important and startling fact—which he communicated, (Vol. IV. p. 403,) that the principal men in every branch of the government, with few exceptions were open and avowed monarchists.

Mr. Jefferson repeatedly asserts, notwithstanding all his insinuations to the contrary—in this letter to Mr. Van Buren, (Vol. IV. p. 406,) in a previous one to Dr. Jones, (p. 237) and in the introduction to his memorable *Anas*, (p. 450) that Gen. Washington “was no monarchist,” “was true to the republican charge confided to him,” and “determined to shed the last drop of his blood in its

defence.” Can it then be deemed morally possible that Washington could have received with indifference under any circumstances at any time, or on any occasion, such intelligence from his prime minister;—that he would have dilated on the encouraging *forms*, and been silent as to the deadly *substance* of treason, by which his country was menaced and he himself was surrounded. That he could neither have perceived, nor learned the prevalence of these monarchical predilections, in the officers of government associated with him, and in the circle of his particular friends, without the expression of mortification and astonishment—is undeniable, from the repeated admissions of Mr. Jefferson himself, as well as from Washington’s uniform character, and the tenor of his whole life. And that had they been uttered by him at any period in presence of that careful *Annalist*, to suppose that they would not have been repeated and exaggerated both in this letter to Mr. Van Buren, and at all other opportunities, is to wander extravagantly into a new hypothesis in direct opposition to the words and spirit of this letter, and of all Mr. Jefferson’s political writings; to the malicious nature of his political ambition; and to the entire system of measures by which he promoted its gratification.

In addition—these odious and alarming *forms*, which Gen. Washington is represented to have adopted from a venial, if not a culpable facility, we are assured, he formally referred to a council of his official advisers; in which Hamilton, the chief of the monarchists, by the success of whose arts, and to advance whose projects they had been introduced, is the first man to join Mr. Jefferson in condemning them, and in advising, especially the discontinuance of the principal one, the inauguration of the President, in presence of both houses of Congress.

This advice, too, was persisted in by Hamilton, when he knew that by concurring with Knox and Randolph, he would have ensured the preservation of these regal forms, and that by siding with Mr. Jefferson he decreed their instant abolition.

Finally—this greatest of all abuses, this inevitable forerunner of kingly government, has been maintained in full vigour ever since, and was punctually observed in the inauguration of Mr. Jefferson himself, who, it seems, on two occasions forgot to “desire the Chief Justice to attend him at his chambers”—although by that omission in his own conscientious belief, he endangered the existence of the Institutions, which on both occasions, he swore “to preserve, maintain, and defend.”

But all this compound of sophistry and fiction, is here, out of respect for the reputed authority of Mr. Jefferson, gratuitously exposed, as it is totally inapplicable to the point at issue. Mr. Jefferson confesses and insists that the letter was published in the American papers with the word *form* instead of *forms*, and he assures Mr. Van Buren in the most earnest and solemn manner, defying not only Mr. Pickering (who, as Mr. Van Buren was de-

sired not to publish his letter, could never hear of his defiance) and Dr. Stuart (who had been dead at least ten years,) but *all mankind* to contradict him, "that not a word written, or verbal, directly or indirectly, ever passed between Gen. Washington and himself on the subject of this letter to Mazzei." If this was the case, and if the substitution of the word *form* for *forms* changed the direction of his censure from the ceremonies of levées, &c. to the principles of our government—made him instead of reprobating birth-night balls "express hostility to the constitution itself" how was it possible for Gen. Washington to "understand perfectly" the *forms* which he had censured in his letter to Mazzei? So that if Mr. Jefferson's earnest and repeated assurances are to be credited—it was impossible for Gen. Washington to have had the least knowledge of a subject, which the same Mr. Jefferson asserts he perfectly understood. To support one part of his explanation he solemnly affirms that the word *forms* as used in his original letter to Mazzei, Gen. Washington never saw, nor heard of, nor conceived, nor inquired about; while to fortify another, he asseverates that "the *forms* which he had censured in his letter to Mazzei, were perfectly understood by Gen. Washington, and were those which he himself but barely tolerated."

It seems reasonable to conclude that at this stage of the investigation, the effect of contrast will recall to your attention, the explanation that was fabricated for the era of 1797, and for the use and abuse of Mr. Madison. In that it was strenuously urged, as an insurmountable obstacle to a fair explanation or an honest acknowledgment of the letter in its genuine shape, that the correction of the word *form* into *forms* could not possibly be effected without bringing on "a personal difference with Gen. Washington." But here, in 1824, it is solemnly declared, by the same high and competent authority, that Gen. Washington was perfectly familiar with the phrase in question, completely understood its meaning, had conferred with Mr. Jefferson and consulted his cabinet on the subject of it, and was necessarily satisfied that no part of the censure it conveyed could possibly have been directed towards himself!

The explanation with which Mr. Van Buren was favoured thus proceeds—"Mr. Pickering quotes too the expression in the letter, of the men who were Samsons in the field, and Solomons in the council, but who had their heads shorn by the harlot England, or, as expressed in their retranslation, 'the men who were Solomons in council and Samsons in combat, but whose hair had been cut off by the whore England.' Now this expression also was perfectly understood by Gen. Washington. He knew that I meant it for the Cincinnati generally, and that from what had passed between us at the commencement of that institution, I could not mean to include him." After repeating the substance of two conversations which he held with Gen. Washington in regard to this institution, and recapitulating the circumstances, which, preventing its entire and

voluntary dissolution, reduced it to "its modified and temporary form," he adds, "disapproving thus of the institution as much as I did, and conscious that I knew him to do so, he could never suppose that I meant to include him among the Samsons in the field, whose object was to draw over us the *form*, as they made the letter say, of the British government, and especially its aristocratic member, an hereditary House of Lords."

Here you will perceive is a new version of his letter to Mazzei—confirming by its author's own express admission the interpretation I have given to the word *form*, whether used in the singular or the plural. It seems at last that the word *forms*, which had been so grievously mistranslated by "federal malice," into *form*, really meant the *forms*, or *members* of the British government; that instead of *court ceremonies*, these *forms* were intended to signify the political institutions, and especially the hereditary peerage of England! What becomes then of all the pother about the miraculous alteration which the "change of the plural into the singular, effects in that phrase of the English language?"

When you recollect that in the very last communication that ever "passed between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson on the subject of the Cincinnati," the latter had declared, (Vol. II. p. 62.) "I know the society wish the permanence of our governments, as much as any individual composing them," this asserted probability of Gen. Washington's feeling assured that an insinuation by Mr. Jefferson of a design to overthrow our government, so far from being directed towards him, was "meant for the Cincinnati generally," will strike you doubtless as singularly felicitous.

On this part of the subject it is unnecessary to waste more time by referring to the elaborate and "true history" of this institution, which is cited in a former letter,\* or by enlarging on the absurdity of supposing that Mazzei or any one else in the old or in the new world, could divine that the reproach and calumny, respecting "the Samsons in combat and Solomons in council" contained in the letter, was intended for the Cincinnati; or that Gen. Washington who was actually their president, would on that supposition feel himself exempt from its censure. For there is one fact that seems not to have been attended to by Mr. Jefferson, in the glow of his invention and invective in regard to this matter, that renders all other objections to them superfluous. It is this—he tells Mazzei that all the mischief and iniquity, which are the subject of his letter, the burthen of his song, had arisen since Mazzei's departure from the United States—"since you left us." Now among the few truths which are bequeathed to posterity in the "philosophic inspiration" of *Jefferson's writings*, is the fact, that this *Florentine*, who, like his countryman, Cassio, was

'A fellow almost damned in a fair wife,'

\* Letter II.

left the United States long after the Society of the Cincinnati was instituted, long after it had cast off its hereditary quality, and received its "modified and temporary form." For in a letter from Paris to John Page, (Vol. I. p. 288,) dated the 20th of August, 1785, Mr. Jefferson says, "I received your friendly letter of April the 28th, by Mazzei on the 22nd July." In one of the 28th of August to Mr. Monroe, then in the United States, he says, "I wrote you on the 5th of July by Mr. Franklin, and on the 12th of the same month by Mr. Houdon. Since that date yours of June the 16th by Mr. Mazzei, has been received." It is clear therefore that Mazzei left the United States between the 16th of June and the 22nd of July, 1785. From Marshall we learn, that this society was instituted in the year 1783, and that in May, 1784, the hereditary principle, and the power of adopting honorary members, were relinquished.\* Mr. Jefferson confirms this account himself, as you have already seen, and may see again by turning to pages 223 and 416 of his first volume. Between his explanation to Mr. Van Buren and the truth, therefore, there is interposed by himself nothing less than an abyss of absolute impossibility.

To render this not only evident but palpable, it is only necessary to mark the train of causation, and the succession of time embraced in his letter to Mazzei. Of time, the earliest stage is the period of that personage's departure from the United States—of causes, the first is the *springing up* of an Anglican, monarchical and aristocratical, party. The immediate effect of this cause is the "drawing over us the *forms* of the British government," and the secondary one which is said to be in progress "the drawing over us" its substance likewise. Then succeed, the enumeration of various "heresies," "the Samsons in combat and the Solomons in council," who had gone over to them—these successive events all subsequent to the grand era of Mazzei's departure from the United States—and the apostasy of the "Samsons and Solomons" so unexpected and shocking, that were Mr. Jefferson to name them, it would give his Florentine friend "a fever." Whoever therefore attaches the smallest credit to Mr. Jefferson's solemn and anxious and iterated imputations against the Cincinnati, or to this elaborate explanation of his letter to Mazzei, must in all consistency, not only believe that effects are antecedent to their causes, but that an event which happened in 1785—was previous in point of time, to one that took place two years before.

He continues to Mr. Van Buren,—"Add to this, that the letter saying, that 'two out of the three branches of Legislature were against us,' was an obvious exception of him; it being well known that the majorities in the two branches of Senate and Representatives were the very instruments which carried in opposition to the old and real republicans, the measures which were the subjects of condemnation in this letter." Mr. Van Buren is also told on a pre-

\* Vol. V. pp. 27, 30.

vious page, that “a faithful copy” of the letter to Mazzei, so far as it related to politics, is inclosed to him. But the “faithful copy” since given to the public, of the same letter, admits not the possibility of excluding Gen. Washington in the mode here essayed, for it says expressly, “against us are the Executive, the Judiciary, two out of three branches of the Legislature,” &c. Now is it possible to conceive that when a man accuses *the Executive* of the United States of treason, he means to except the President from that charge? The second article of the Constitution declares—‘The executive power of the United States shall be vested in a President’—language which confirms the universal acceptance of the terms. If then Mr. Van Buren’s *press copy* resembled the letter now published, as closely as the *President* and the *Executive* resemble each other in signification, he must have felt his credulity not a little strained by the course of Mr. Jefferson’s misstatement and sophistry. It would seem therefore not improbable that as in the case of the letter to Col. Burr, his press had the faculty of producing dissimilar copies of the same document, and that in the one furnished to Mr. Van Buren, the word *Executive* at least was omitted.

Again—At the time Mr. Jefferson wrote the slander in question to Mazzei, the administration was in a minority in the House of Representatives as he himself observes in a letter to Mr. Madison, when censuring the ratification of Jay’s treaty, (Vol. III. p. 316.) “For it certainly is an attempt of a party, who find they have lost their majority in one branch of the Legislature, to make a law by the aid of the other branch and the Executive, &c.” Indeed, as early as the session of 1793, the opposition obtained an ascendancy in the House of Representatives, as was proved by the election of their candidate for the Speaker’s chair by a majority of ten votes.\*

But independently of this fact, the measures *principally* condemned in this letter, were not legislative measures; they were, as Mr. Jefferson asserts, the executive and monarchical *levées, balls, &c.*—and the aristocratical order of the Cincinnati. So that according to his explanation, the desperate effort to separate the *President* from the *Executive* is labour in vain.

To these *principal* subjects accordingly he immediately recurs in the following passage—“Gen. Washington then, understanding perfectly what and whom I meant to designate, in both phrases,” (that is by the *form* or *forms* of the British government, and ‘the Samsons in combat and Solomons in council’) “and that they could not have had any application or view to himself, could find in neither any cause of offence to himself; and therefore neither needed, nor ever asked any explanation of them from me. Had it been otherwise, they must know very little of Gen. Washington who should believe to be within the laws of his character, what Dr. Stuart is said to have imputed to him. Be this, however as it may,

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 474.

the story is infamously false in every article of it. My last parting with Gen. Washington was at the inauguration of Mr. Adams in March, 1797, and was warmly affectionate; and I never had any reason to believe any change on his part, as there certainly was none on mine. But one session of Congress intervened between that and his death, in the year following, in my passage to and from which, as it happened not to be convenient to call on him, I never had another opportunity; and as to the cessation of correspondence observed during that short interval, no particular circumstance occurred for epistolary communication, and both of us were too much oppressed with letter writing, to trouble either the other with a letter about nothing."

This may all be very smooth and fine, and commendable, as a specimen of fluent narration, but unfortunately, like most of Mr. Jefferson's deliberate statements, it is by his own testimony, totally destitute of truth. You will observe that the chief fact here relied on to disprove the statement of Dr. Stuart, is that Mr. Jefferson enjoyed, as far as he had reason to believe the *warm and affectionate friendship* of Gen. Washington, up to the moment of that great man's death. Now if we turn to page 453 of this same fourth volume—where Mr. Jefferson is solemnly recommending the contents of his *Ansas* to the faith of posterity, we shall find the following statement, dated the 4th of February, 1818.—“The opposition, too, of the Republicans to the British treaty, and the zealous support of the Federalists in that unpopular but favourite measure of theirs, had made him (Gen. Washington) all their own. Understanding, moreover, that I disapproved of that treaty, and copiously nourished with falsehoods by a malignant neighbour of mine, who ambitioned to be his correspondent, *he had become alienated from myself personally*, as from the Republican party, generally, of his fellow-citizens.” This positive declaration, similar to one made four years previously to Dr. Jones, (Vol. IV. p. 237,) stamps indelible falsehood on the story spun out so elaborately for Mr. Van Buren, and would appear to supersede all further notice of it.

But Mr. Jefferson, though he seldom relates the truth, either with regard to himself or his adversaries, often suffers it to transpire. Now although Mr. Pickering and Dr. Stuart were both men of veracity, and maintained through life, the one, a respectable, and the other an eminent, reputation; yet as the statement made successively by them has the questionable character of hearsay, and is pointedly denied by Mr. Jefferson, it may perhaps be supposed by prejudiced minds to be founded in error—either that Dr. Stuart was himself misinformed, or had been misunderstood by Mr. Pickering. An attentive examination of Mr. Jefferson's contradiction, however, positive and vindictive as it is, will convince the most incredulous, that the veracity of those two gentlemen is entirely unimpeached by it, and that their statement having all the weight due to their characters, and the force derived from a

strong contemporaneous impression in its confirmation, known to many by memory, and by tradition to more, is, according to the established rules of reasoning in such cases, to be received as accurately and indisputably true.

The objections by which Mr. Jefferson endeavours to discredit this statement consist of assertions of fact, and of inferences from those assertions. But his assertions, or as he would say, his facts, turn out to be *false*, and consequently authorize a conclusion as different from his inferences as truth is from falsehood—that is, they authorize a full belief in, instead of an utter disbelief which he insists upon, of the statement. For example, he argues that as Gen. Washington understood perfectly what he meant by both phrases in the letter to Mazzei, he could have taken no offence at either of them; and, that as he could have taken no offence, he needed no explanation; and that as he needed no explanation, he demanded none. But it has been proved to demonstration on Mr. Jefferson's own authority, that inasmuch as Gen. Washington had never seen the phrase—"the *forms* of the British government"—and had received no explanation of its alleged mistranslation, he could not in the nature of things have understood it as Mr. Jefferson declares it was meant; and that from the limitation of time, to a period posterior to the establishment, and even to the modification, of the Cincinnati, an absolute impossibility stood in the way of his conceiving the phrase "Samsons and Solomons" in the sense assumed and insisted on by Mr. Jefferson. It therefore follows in a chain of unbroken deduction, connected by the same reasoning which Mr. Jefferson employs on the same subject—that Gen. Washington must have taken offence at "both phrases;" that as he took offence at them he needed an explanation; and that as he needed an explanation he demanded it. This conclusion may throw some additional light on "the lost correspondence."

The insinuation that such a step would have been inconsistent with "the laws of Gen. Washington's character," is especially immaterial as coming from Mr. Jefferson, who declares, as has been already remarked, that on the mere mention of a pasquinade the object of which was to represent Gen. Washington as aiming to make himself king, "he got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself," and cried out before his whole cabinet, "that *by God*, he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation," (Vol. IV. p. 491.) Now if a mere anonymous lampoon could inflame him to such a degree of fury, is it difficult to suppose, or does it transgress "the laws of character" and probability to believe that an accusation of the same tendency, coming before the public in a written form, from one of the most eminent men for official station and reputed talents in the country, a man who had all along professed a warm and even a zealous friendship for him, and had a short time before conjured him not to listen to any in-

formation tending "to sow tares between them"—should excite his indignation and resentment?

The assertion that they had a "warmly affectionate" parting at Philadelphia in March, 1797—which is flatly contradicted by a declaration to Dr. Jones (p. 237)—so far from obviating this inference, fortifies it; for the more warm had been Gen. Washington's affection for Mr. Jefferson while he supposed him to be his friend, the more strong would be his indignation at finding him his enemy. March, 1797, the period of Mr. Adams's inauguration, was the precise time of Gen. Washington's becoming a private citizen, and Mr. Jefferson assures us that the letter to Mazzei "was not known here until after he became a private citizen."

When to all these contradictions, misstatements, inconsistencies, and false inferences, is added the admitted fact, that after the publication of the letter to Mazzei in the American papers, Mr. Jefferson held no correspondence with Gen. Washington, that from his own writings it appears that he passed his house without calling, at least six different times in going to and returning from Congress; (three sessions instead of one having intervened;) and when we recollect too, the real fondness of the General, and the professed predilection of the philosopher, for agriculture; that the former had but lately laid down the office of President and the latter assumed that of Vice President, and that in the interval of this strict non-intercourse, Washington had accepted the appointment of Lieutenant-General and Commander-in-Chief of the American army, an event that attracted the attention of Europe\*—it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that an estrangement had arisen between them. Mr. Jefferson protests to Mr. Van Buren that "no change had taken place on his part. It follows, then, that it occurred on the part of Gen. Washington—that he was indignant at finding himself the sport of Mr. Jefferson's malicious hypocrisy—that he had imprudently confided in his insincere professions, and too long neglected the faithful counsels of his friend Gen. Lee.

This subject being now disposed of, (though it might have been despatched in a less tedious manner but for the huge disproportion between Mr. Jefferson's virtues and popularity) you will, I think, be convinced that not only are the two explanations of his letter to Mazzei inconsistent with each other, but that each of them separately is inconsistent with truth. You will also, I apprehend, be compelled to conclude, that the imputations contained in that letter, upon Gen. Washington and his principal friends, were unfounded in fact and calumnious in spirit; that the equivocating refusal to avow and explain it, betrayed at once pusillanimity, and malice; and that the gross and deliberate misstatements by which it is justified, first to Mr. Madison, and last to Mr. Van Buren, are sufficient to deprive Mr. Jefferson's most solemn assertions, in

\* Memoires de Napoleon, tome II. p. 110. (Gourgaud.)

all cases in which his interests are concerned, or his passions enlisted, of the slightest claim whatever to credit.\*

[\* I should deem what is said in the text in relation to the Mazzei letter and the controversies which have arisen out of it, as having exhausted the whole subject, and requiring neither corroboration or supplement, were it not for Mr. Tucker's remarks in regard to it. They are contained between pages 518 and 528 in the first volume of his Life of Jefferson. Nor would I have the judicious reader to suppose that I deem the intrinsic force of those remarks sufficient to entitle them to the notice I am about to bestow on them. But when I reflect on the manner and the place in which this biography has been got up, and the auspices under which it was ushered into the world, as well as some other circumstances which will appear in the sequel, it seems to be the safer course not to permit this portion of that work to escape exposure.

When these "Observations on the Writings of Jefferson" were first published, they excited that attention which it was natural to expect for a work of such ability, boldness and novelty, on a subject so interesting to the American public. Rumours were ripe of a thousand pens ready to leap from their inkstands to vindicate the fame of the hero of American jacobinism. Reflection, however, gave them the early advice of Sancho to Don Quixote, to turn back while the world was yet unapprized of his having undertaken his high adventures; and wiser than the Knight, they all took it. At the University of Virginia, however, within sight of Monticello, and a short ride of the whole magazine of *press-copies* which had been there collected, it was for some time thought that the genius and resources of the learned brotherhood might produce something to parry this attack upon Mr. Jefferson's reputation, and (what was of more difficulty) render his own writings less destructive to his fame. From the anxious cogitations employed upon this subject resulted, it would seem, Mr. Tucker's book, which was to be an abridgement of Mr. Jefferson's Writings, interspersed with such remarks and reflections as might best serve to cover their imperfections, neutralize their poison, and avert the blows which they drew upon their author. How well Mr. Tucker has performed this task it is no part of mine to examine; but I must beg him to separate as completely my respect for him, from that with which I may seem to treat his book, as he assures us Mr. Jefferson did his respect for the character of Washington, from that with which he regarded his measures. Nor will I here withhold the praise I think due to his book—that as an abridgement of Mr. Jefferson's Writings it is tolerably fair,—that his efforts to be candid are not unfrequent, and the more laudable as they are evidently painful,—and that the occasional success of those efforts afford to the judicious reader a sufficient antidote to the bane of those Writings and that character, which Mr. Tucker holds up to the admiration of mankind. But how lamentable an absence his work shows of that earnestness in the pursuit of truth, which is the highest virtue of the historian, the following remarks will show.

Mr. Tucker says that we have abundant evidence to satisfy a candid inquirer, that Gen. Washington was not "designated in that passage of the letter which says, 'against us are the executive, and two out of three branches of the legislature,'" nor "comprehended among the apostates, who, though Samsons in the field, and Solomons in the council," &c. And what is this abundant evidence? Why, that "not only in his, (Mr. Jefferson's) diary, does he repeatedly express his conviction that Gen. Washington was a republican in his attachments," "but also in several of his letters to individuals of the same party as himself; and in the long letter he wrote to Gen. Washington to dissuade him from retiring at the end of the first term, he not only would not have urged him to continue, if he had believed that his principles were opposed to those to which he showed through life such a rooted attachment, and on which his hopes of favour with his countrymen rested, but he would never have ventured to censure so roundly as he did in that letter the principles which he believed were those of Gen. Washington. This letter, then, is

## LETTER VIII.

WE have at length reached the point of time, in the progress of this tasteless but not unfruitful investigation, at which the letter

of itself utterly inconsistent with the fact that he intended to comprehend in his letter to Mazzei him, whom he had at all other times excepted. They were plainly meant for Hamilton, Adams, Jay, the Pinkneys, and some others who had been distinguished in the revolution as soldiers or statesmen, and who then guided the executive councils, but who, by their Anglican attachments and antigallican prejudices, were endeavouring as much as they could to assimilate our government to that of Great Britain."

As the foregoing extract contains both assertions and inferences, it will be proper to consider, first, its statements, and then its logic. It asserts that Mr. Jefferson "had at *all other times excepted*" Gen. Washington from the reproaches which the letter to Mazzei cast upon his advisers. Yet the very next topic to which this biographer adverts is introduced by the following extract of a letter of Mr. Jefferson to Col. Monroe, (page 528:) "You will have seen by the proceedings of congress the truth of what I *always* observed to you, that *one man* outweighs them all in influence over the people, who have supported *his judgment* against their own and that of their representatives. *Republicanism* must lie on its oars; resign the vessel to its pilot; and themselves to the course he thinks best for them." The father of the republic is the "*one man*" (*one* is italicised in Mr. Tucker's text,) here alluded to, as forcing republicanism to lie upon its oars, and the conduct which produces this unhappy result is charged to proceed from "*his judgment*," and not that of any advisers.

In the same volume at page 379, Mr. Tucker has recorded another proof of Mr. Jefferson's pretended suspicions of Gen. Washington's monarchical tendencies, and of how calmly and closely Mr. Jefferson watched for words and incidents which might be tortured into proofs of them. "The President (Washington) then remarked, that 'he did not like throwing too much into democratic hands, for that if they did not do what the constitution called on them to do, the government would be at an end, and must then assume another form.'" He stopped here; and Mr. Jefferson remarks: "I kept silence, to see whether he would say any thing more in the same line, or add any qualifying expression to soften what he had said; but he did neither."

Mr. Tucker (page 513) abridges a letter of Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Giles, dated December 31, 1795, in which the writer imputes to Mr. Edmund Randolph's "want of firmness the President's habitual concert with the British and anti-republican party," and "warmly condemns that disposition to holt between two parties, and deems it to be as immoral as to pursue a middle line between honest men and rogues."

These are some of many contradictions, which Mr. Tucker has himself recorded, of his assertion that Mr. Jefferson "had at *all other times excepted*" Gen. Washington from reproaches like those contained in the Mazzei letter.

Another assertion of the extract under consideration is, that, at the date of the Mazzei letter, (April 24th, 1796,) Hamilton, Adams, Jay, the Pinkneys, and some others then guided the executive councils. To appreciate fully the gratuitousness, (considering the character of Washington, it must be added,) the impudence of this statement, the reader must bear in mind that not one of the persons here named was a member of the cabinet at the period referred to:

that gave occasion to it, was written. In pursuing it you will find, that notwithstanding the professions of friendship, respect,

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That body then consisted of Col. Pickering, Mr. Wolcot, Col. M<sup>Henry</sup>, and Mr. Charles Lee. If there be any so besotted with *Jeffersonianism* as to believe, that he who by the suffrages of all mankind has been regarded as the Colossus of American independence, and the father of the republic, was habitually the tool of others, can they suppose that his justice, which has been so universally lauded, could have permitted him to fix the responsibility of the executive conduct upon one set of men, while it was under the guidance of another? Yet Mr. Tucker asserts this to be the fact, and that the reproaches of Mr. Jefferson against the executive "were *plainly* meant" for these illustrious men, who were in no way connected with that department. This is going beyond and contradicting Mr. Jefferson himself, who in his letter to Mr. Madison *plainly* admits that Washington was included in the reproached executive, and in that to Mr. Van Buren, is silent upon that conclusive word, and divides his censures of the Samsons and Solomons among the whole Society of the Cincinnati.

So much for Mr. Tucker's statements—now for his logic. To appreciate the force of that, the reader must bear in mind that the charge against Mr. Jefferson is of duplicity—that while he praised Washington to himself and his friends, he secretly traduced him to answer his own sinister ends, and that as a proof of the latter branch of this charge, his letter to his Italian gossip is referred to. And what is it that Mr. Tucker so confidently pronounces as "*of itself utterly inconsistent* with the fact that he intended to comprehend" Gen. Washington in that precious epistle? Why, that several years before, "he wrote a long letter to the General to dissuade him from retiring at the end of the first term." And why is that "utterly inconsistent with the fact that he wrote a letter abusive of Gen. Washington several years after?" Why, first, says Mr. Tucker, because "he would not have urged him to continue" in office if he had believed him to entertain monarchical attachments. But Mr. Tucker says that Mr. Adams was comprehended in this abuse, was "endeavouring as much as he could to assimilate our government to that of Great Britain;" and has also recorded (page 532) while the first contest for the presidency was pending between Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, (the very year of the letter to Mazzei) the latter wrote to Mr. Madison "to urge on his behalf that Mr. Adams should be preferred on the ground of seniority, both as to years and public services," in case "*of an equality of electoral votes between*" them, and said that "he was impelled both by *duty* and inclination" to take that course. Thus it seems by Mr. Tucker's own showing, that Mr. Jefferson might urge the election to the presidency of one comprehended in the reproachful clauses of the letter to Mazzei. Mr. Tucker must, therefore, be driven to rely solely on his second reason to establish the utter inconsistency he contends for, viz: that Mr. Jefferson "would never have ventured to censure so roundly as he did in that letter (the long one to Gen. Washington) the principles which he believed were those of Gen. Washington."

This will be readily admitted. No one pretends, or can be so stupid as to imagine that Mr. Jefferson really believed Gen. Washington to entertain monarchical attachments, or to have ever "acted in concert" with a party which was "British and anti-republican." Mr. Jefferson is charged with asserting, not what he believed to be true of Gen. Washington, but what he knew to be false; and Mr. Tucker relies on the truth of one half of the charge to disprove the whole of it! Verily if he will teach the law students of the University to meet actions of slander by so simple a process, our courts will soon cease to be troubled with that pestiferous class of cases.

Having thus summarily and satisfactorily (to himself at least,) disposed of the first in his arrangement of the charges against Mr. Jefferson, growing out of the Mazzei letter, he next essays to dissipate those which relate to the sup-

meditation, and retirement; notwithstanding the new declaration of fidelity and devotion which it was intended to prefer to Gen.

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posed correspondence between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson subsequent to the retirement of the former from the presidency. The biographer treats the alleged suppositions on this subject as nearly gratuitous; and rests this conclusion upon Mr. Jefferson's denial and the nature of the testimony which alone is opposed to that denial. But it is the duty of the historian to collect as well as to weigh evidence, and the sources from which to seek it in reference to this subject were well known, and peculiarly accessible, to Mr. Tucker. What would have been the result of properly directed inquiries by him is apparent from the following correspondence, which proves, too, that one at least of Mr. Tucker's assertions, viz: that "*no one is alive who pretends to have heard Rawlins make the assertion,*" is perfectly gratuitous.

Ravensworth, December 1, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—The publication of Mr. Jefferson's "Writings," and of works to which they have given rise, has directed attention anew to the subject of a correspondence, which is alleged to have taken place between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson, after the former retired from the Presidency. You are aware that, in a letter to Mr. Van Buren, dated June 29, 1824, Mr. Jefferson denied that any letters whatever passed between Gen. Washington and himself after the period referred to. For though his denial is pointed more particularly against any correspondence between them on the subject of his famous letter to Mazzei, it extends plainly enough to the existence of any upon any subject. His words are—"My last parting with Gen. Washington was at the inauguration of Mr. Adams, in March, 1797, and was warmly affectionate; and I never had any reason to believe any change on his part, as there certainly was none on mine. But one session of congress intervened between that and his death, the year following, in my passage to and from which, as it happened to be not convenient to call on him, I never had another opportunity; and *as to the cessation of correspondence* observed during that short interval, no particular circumstance occurred for epistolary communication, and both of us were too much oppressed with letter writing to trouble either the other with a letter about nothing."

It is obvious that any correspondence, and especially an angry one, between Washington and Jefferson, after March, 1797, is incompatible with the veracity of the foregoing extract. Still I should deem the argument on this subject in Major Lee's "Observations on the Writings of Jefferson" sufficient to satisfy candid inquirers after truth, were it not for the statements Professor Tucker has given to the world in his recent biography of that gentleman. He says, at page 524 of the first volume of that work, "The supposition," viz: of the correspondence in question, "seems to be either a mere inference from doubtful facts, or to rest on vague, unsupported and improbable rumour." Then after stating the inference and arguing against its justice, he adds, "There was also a rumour on this subject that Rawlins, whom Gen. Washington employed about this time as an amanuensis, told a merchant in Alexandria that he had copied a letter from the General to Mr. Jefferson relative to the Mazzei letter, which was so very severe "*it made his hair stand on end.*" I have inquired into this story, and it seems as unsupported as the rest. Rawlins is dead; and *no one is alive who pretends to have heard Rawlins make the assertion.*"

Knowing how long Mr. Tucker has enjoyed your intimate acquaintance, I confess I was surprised at the assertion with which this extract concludes. Recollecting how often he has seen from your door the trees of Mount Vernon,—how well he knew your near relationship to Gen. Washington, your double connexion with his family, and the strong likelihood of your being able to give him authentic information concerning its traditions,—it seemed to me so natural and proper that he should have applied to you when inquiring "into

Washington, and the new grant of confidence which it actually extracted from him; the same deceitful and injurious practices,

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the truth of this story," (as he undertakes to call the assertions of such men as Col. Pickering and Dr. Stuart,) that it is even yet with difficulty that I can reconcile the respect I feel for Mr. Tucker with his omission to have done so. You will see, at once, the natural effect of the part he has taken. It may now be fairly and forcibly urged—that here is a work, assuming the character of impartial history, written by a gentleman whose children are the grandchildren of the niece of Washington—that the author's connexion with the family of that illustrious man, while it afforded the means of obtaining that more intimate knowledge of him which is seldom transferred to history, naturally made him also more anxious to disseminate it accurately—yet he treats the assertion of a nearer connexion of that same family as an idle story. It cannot be supposed that he did so until he had exhausted those sources of information on the subject, to which he had the easiest access, and as he obtained none worthy of his regard it must be presumed that none such existed.

I think you will agree with me that truth in relation to this point of history is in danger of suppression, and that too, to the detriment of the characters of those whom you respect, and to the undue advantage of the reputation of one, whom the family of Washington (as far as I have the honour of their acquaintance,) regard with a very different sentiment. To prevent this is an object of sufficient importance, I hope, to entitle me to your compliance with the request which is the object of this letter, and to justify which I have fatigued you with this long preface. Will you, my dear sir, give me a written statement of whatever your memory can furnish on the subject of this last correspondence? It is proper to tell you that, with your permission, I shall make use of the testimony you may furnish in the edition of Major Lee's "Observations on the Writings of Mr. Jefferson," which I am preparing for the press. Please therefore make it as circumstantial as you can conveniently; for details will carry that conviction to the minds of strangers, which your character will exact from those who know you. But however brief your statement, it will be important, and gratefully received by, dear sir,

Yours, most sincerely,

C. C. LEE.

To LAWRENCE LEWIS, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—In compliance with your request, I now send you all the information I have upon the subject of the letters said to have passed between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson, a short time before the death of the General: I resided at Mount Vernon at the time. An old friend, Mr. Francis Thornton, and Mr. Samuel Washington called to see me. After dinner, whilst sitting round the table, Col. Tobias Lear and G. W. P. Custis, being also present, Mr. Thornton inquired, "if a very friendly correspondence had not taken place between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson, but a short time before the General's death—that such was the report in Fredericksburg." I answered, it must be one of the many reports in circulation, without the least foundation. Col. Lear immediately said, "Yes, it is so, for I have seen the letters." (At this time Col. Lear had been put in possession of all Gen. Washington's letters and papers by the late Judge Washington, and was daily in the office arranging and selecting those papers necessary for the Biography of Washington.) I stated my reasons for supposing it a mere report, and reminded Col. Lear of a conversation which had taken place between himself, Gen. Washington, and Dr. David Stuart, when I was present. He said, "yes, but it was after that." It so happened, that Dr. Stuart came to Mount Vernon that evening. I informed him of Lear's assertion. He appeared to doubt it, and referred to the conversation between Lear, Gen. Washington and himself, when I was present. He then remarked, I shall see Lear in Alexandria in the morning, and will get him to be more

which have been already exposed, were unrelentingly persevered in by Mr. Jefferson. On the 10th of July, less than one month

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explicit. Upon his return to Mount Vernon, he informed me he had seen Lear, who repeated to him what he had said at the table the day before, but refused to communicate the contents of the letters—and asserted, they *were of a very friendly nature.* The Doctor still doubted the accuracy of Col. Lear's statement, and requested me to invite Mr. Rawlins, (Gen. Washington's confidential clerk,) to walk with us. During our walk, the Doctor asked him if he had any recollection of a correspondence between Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson, but a short time before the General's death. Rawlins answered, yes. Dr. Stuart, "Will you tell us the subject of those letters?" Mr. Rawlins, "I feel myself bound to secrecy in every thing relating to the General's letters." But you can say whether they were of a friendly nature or not," said Dr. Stuart. Rawlins, "I think I may venture so far—they *were not.*" The first was, he said, rather a letter of inquiry, the second one was so severe, and excited his feelings so much, that the hair appeared to rise on his head, as he recorded it, and he felt that it must produce a duel—that the third letter was of a milder tone, but not a very gratifying one. The above is what I heard Rawlins say myself. Various were the conjectures, as to the cause which produced this correspondence. Dr. Stuart was of opinion it must have been the Mazzei letter, and under that impression his communication to Col. Pickering was made. It is proper to state, that Mr. Rawlins was highly respectable, and esteemed by all the members of the family at Mount Vernon.

Be pleased to accept the regard and esteem of your friend,

LAWR. LEWIS.

WOODLAWN, January 15th, 1839.

The fourth charge in the progress of Mr. Tucker's vindication is, "that he (Mr. Jefferson) attempted to show in his letter to Mr. Van Buren, that the term (what term?) did not comprehend General Washington, because by the two branches of the legislature, he meant the two Houses of Congress; whereas it was notorious, as he himself admitted, that a majority of the House of Representatives were at that time members of the republican or opposition party. This must be admitted; but it is only an evidence of his lapse of memory, in grounding an argument on a subordinate fact, in support of what he knew to be the truth."

As well prepared as the reader must be, by this time, to meet with curious things in Mr. Tucker's logic, he will be surprised at the specimen of it contained in the last sentence. The question for consideration is, whether Gen. Washington was comprehended among those "two of the three branches of the legislature," which came within the reproaches of the Mazzei letter? Mr. Tucker admits that the House of Representatives could not have been in that predicament, because Mr. Jefferson knew, at the time, that its majority was of his own party. But he says this is "a subordinate fact," and would have us infer that therefore it is not necessary to the truth of an argument grounded upon it. Without dwelling upon this peculiar quality of a "subordinate fact," I will ask how it comes to be subordinate? Mr. Jefferson admits that he reproached *two* out of three branches of the legislature in April, 1796; but asserts that these two were the two Houses of Congress. Mr. Tucker says, No—this is a mistake—a lapse of memory natural enough to an octogenarian; he could not have included the popular branch of the legislature in the censure referred to. How is that a subordinate fact in the chain of reasoning to show that the President and Senate were the *two* branches which were denounced? In language, new it must be confessed to the writers on the Constitution, the legislative department is divided by Mr. Jefferson into *three* branches, the President, Senate and House of Representatives. *Two* of these are distinctly denounced

subsequently, he thus broadly insinuates to Mr. Monroe (Vol. III. p. 335,) that Gen. Washington is a monarchist and a man of

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by the author of this novel division, and nearly thirty years after a question arises as to which *two* of the three, that denunciation is to be justly applied to. It is clearly ascertained that the House of Representatives cannot be, and never could have been, visited with it—Is not that a *conclusive* fact to show that it ever did, and ever must, rest upon the President and Senate? As to Mr. Tucker's attempt, in a note on the following page, to confound lapses of memory of this magnitude, and about the important and impressive events which agitate the prime of life, with such as regard the words of his own name, or the letters in Dr. Dunglison's,—it shows much more clearly the weakness of his cause, than the justness of his views of the understanding. Another error of Mr. Tucker's is not unimportant, as showing the carelessness with which he handles his historical materials. He says the only mistake in the letter to Mr. Van Buren is the one already admitted; whereas there is evidently another. For Mr. Jefferson says in that letter, that but *one* session of congress intervened between his parting with Gen. Washington in March, 1797, and the death of the General, which occurred December 14th, 1799, “*in my passage to and from which, (one session of congress,) as it happened not to be convenient to call on him, I never had another opportunity.*” Thus Mr. Jeffersou had three opportunities of calling on his illustrious friend which he omitted to improve, and for which omission he has not assigned any reason. Mr. Tucker will doubtless attribute this mistake on the part of Mr. Jefferson to defect of memory, which he may very fairly do; but this will not explain Mr. Jefferson's neglect of a man whose society all the world sought, and whom he had peculiar reasons to love and honour.

In the text there are several intimations that the author felt great doubt as to the correctness of the copy of the Mazzei letter which Mr. Jefferson has given to the world. Mr. Tucker may have deemed this doubt “nearly gratuitous,” and therefore thought it unworthy of his attention. But I think a candid consideration of the following facts will prove it to have been well founded. If we may trust the “*Memoirs of Jefferson*,” before referred to, (see Vol. II. p. 3,) the letter as it appeared in the American newspapers, was in the following words.

*“To Mr. Mazzei, author of Researches, Historical and Political, upon the United States of America, now resident in Tuscany.*

“Our political situation is prodigiously changed since you left us. Instead of that noble love of liberty, and that republican government which carried us through the war, AN ANGLO-MONARCHIC-ARISTOCRATIC PARTY has risen. Their avowed object is to impose on us the substance, as they have already given us the form, of the British government. Nevertheless, the principal body of our citizens remain faithful to republican principles. All our proprietors of lands are friendly to those principles, as also the men of talents. We have against us (republicans) the Executive power—the Judiciary power (two out of three branches of our government)—all the officers of government—all who are seeking office—all timid men, who prefer the calms of despotism to the tempestuous sea of liberty—the British merchants, and the Americans who trade on British capitals—the speculators—persons interested in the public funds—establishments invented with views of corruption, and to assimilate us to the British model in its corrupt parts.

“I should give you a fever were I to name *the apostates* who have embraced their heresies: men who were SOLOMONS IN COUNCIL AND SAMSONS IN COMBAT, BUT WHOSE HAIR HAS BEEN CUT OFF BY THE WHORE OF ENGLAND.

“They would wrest from us that liberty which we have obtained by so much labour and peril; but we shall preserve it. Our mass of weight and riches is so powerful that we have nothing to fear from any attempt against us by force.

duplicity. "They see that nothing can support them but the Colossus of the President's merits with the people, and the mo-

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It is sufficient that we guard ourselves, and that we break the *Lilliputian ties*, by which they bound us, in the first slumbers which succeeded our labours. It suffices that we arrest the progress of that system of ingratitude and injustice towards France, from which they would alienate us to bring us under British influence."

The reader will have clearly perceived that Mr. Jefferson was anxious to rid himself as much as possible of the responsibility which attached to the authorship of that letter; and that while he refrained from acknowledging it at all to the public, he anxiously limited that acknowledgement to his most intimate friend, Mr. Madison. Yet while he complains to him of alterations in the form of his expressions, he mentions but one instance in which the substance was "materially falsified." "I could not (he writes) avow it as it stood, because the form was not mine; and in one place, the substance very materially falsified." That one place, it will be remembered, was in the perfectly immaterial addition of the letters s to the word form, about which enough has been said. If, therefore, Mr. Jefferson thought it worth while to search so astutely for variations in the published letter from that which he wrote to his Italian friend, as his nice discovery of the omission of a single letter would indicate, is it probable that he would have overlooked two really material alterations in the letter. For in that which the journals published we find nothing of this new and extraordinary division of our national legislature into three branches, which the *press-copy* discovers to the world. The former speaks a language which we all recognise when it refers to our *government* as divided into three branches, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial; but to call our executive a branch of the legislature, is to confound departments which the constitution carefully separated, and whose careful separation both in the British and American governments has been the theme of the greatest praise by writers upon both. Neither does Mr. Jefferson mention to Mr. Madison the last sentence of the published letter as a spurious addition to his own: although in his letter to Mr. Van Buren, 28 years after, he magnifies it into "the interpolation of an entire paragraph," which he says has been the constant burthen of federal calumny, and that "even Judge Marshall makes history descend from its dignity, and the ermine from its sanctity, to exaggerate, to record, and to sanction this forgery."

The reader will perceive how perfectly gratuitous this attack upon Judge Marshall is by turning to the last note to his Life of Washington. He will there find with surprise (at least I did,) that there is not one word said about the contents of this letter to Mazzei, but that only some remarks, which accompanied its publication in the Moniteur, are given, without a single comment by the Judge, in illustration of that part of the text to which the note refers, and which is a letter from Washington to Hamilton.

But supposing this sentence to have been a forgery, how was any one to be blamed for regarding it as genuine, when notwithstanding its having been made so long a theme for calumny, Mr. Jefferson never informed the world of its spurious character. Under these circumstances, and at this stage of the controversy, it seems most probable that the sentence in question is as genuine as any other portion of the letter of which it is published as a part. For to whom are we to impute the alleged forgery? It would have been too insignificant a deed for the gigantic wickedness of those persons in France to whom Mr. Jefferson says he had always imputed it, and even he does not suspect his Italian friend of it. That "it may have been done here, with the commentary handed down to posterity by the Judge," (Marshall,) is a supposition only reckless enough for Mr. Jefferson's mind to have entertained, or his pen to have scribbled. It therefore seems most probable, both from the nature of the case,

ment he retires, that his successor, if a monocrat, will be overborne by the republican sense of his constituents; if a republican, he will

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as well as from Mr. Jefferson's long silence, and first assertions to Mr. Madison, that the sentence was not a forgery.

Another proof that the *press-copy* is rather to be regarded in that light, is derived from the following sentence in the letter to Mr. Madison: "The original has a sentiment like this, (for I have it not before me,) " &c. Now to treat this as the communication of an honest man to a friend to whom he was opening his soul and applying for advice, we must suppose Mr. Jefferson meant to assert that he had no rough draft or accurate copy of the original letter within convenient reach. For, that Mr. Madison should have been gravely informed that he had not before him the very letter he sent to Italy the year before, would have been a piece of idleness that we cannot expect to find in the confidential correspondence of such men. Still it is difficult to conceive why the *press-copy* of it should not have been as much within reach at Monticello the year after the original (which was also dated at that place) was written, as it was 28 years after, when Mr. Van Buren was favoured with an explanation and transcript of it. We must therefore either suppose that Mr. Jefferson had no copy of this letter, or that it was such a one as he did not wish Mr. Madison to see. Between these and other inferences which the foregoing facts will suggest, the reader may choose for himself; and he can easily imagine how a *press-copy* might have then been prepared, which, at this distance of time, might deceive a more critical inspector of Mr. Jefferson's papers than he would expect to find in Mr. Tucker.

This biographer winds up his dissertation on this subject by considering the concluding part of the letter to Mr. Van Buren, and while asserting the truth of this portion of it, contradicts its statements; and in his very attack upon the federalists bestows unwittingly upon them high commendation. The reader after overcoming his astonishment that it should be gravely asserted by Mr. Jefferson and seconded by Mr. Tucker, (page 521,) that Gen. Washington, after his cabinet became entirely federal, "had no opportunity of hearing both sides of any question," will find delivered to the world by these two authorities for true history, that "the continued assiduities of that party drew him into the vortex of their intemperate career." By then turning over a few leaves, will be found on page 528, that "though he occasionally acted with either party—most often with the federalists—he approved or condemned the acts and opinions of either, with an impartiality which entitled him to the praise that no other of his cotemporaries could boast—of being a man of no party." The reader will be at once struck with the discordance in the chimes of Mr. Jefferson's forgiveness of Gen. Washington's intemperance, and Mr. Tucker's praise of his impartiality, and a little reflection will enable him to appreciate the commendation bestowed upon the federalists by the confession of a hostile historian that their conduct obtained the larger share of Washington's approbation, and that, too, at the very time he is enforcing an attack of their bitterest enemy upon them. For in a preceding part of the paragraph which the last citation concludes, Mr. Tucker says, "It is then truly remarked by Mr. Jefferson, that the federal party act the part of friends to themselves rather than of Washington, in seeking to make him the sharer of the bitter obloquy they provoked," &c. Well, what would Mr. Tucker, and all who think like him, have the federalists to do? Would he have them assert that the great Washington was a dupe and tool in their hands?—that they shaped his measures and inspired his conduct—that they made him quell domestic insurrection and resist foreign violence—that, in short, that civic renown of his, which transcends his military fame, is the work of their minds, and should adorn their reputations? Or would he have them tell the truth as they have done—that they adopted the principles, approved the measures, and supported the administra-

of course give fair play to that sense, and lead things into harmony between the governors and governed." "Most assiduous court is

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tion of Washington whom they were proud to acknowledge as their chief, and sustain as their leader? Which is the most honourable to Washington—to be regarded as the director or the dupe of those whom he called into his councils—to be respected as the master of those measures which he held out to his countrymen as his own, or pitied as a puppet which was "played off by the cunning of Hamilton," and "taken in by Humphreys," as his pretended friend, Mr. Jefferson, asserts he was? When Gen. Lee pronounced him to have been "first in war, *first in peace*, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," he uttered nothing more than his own deep conviction, and that of every federalist in America. Such an outrage upon truth and upon the character of Washington, as that he was held in leading strings by his "entirely federal cabinet," and led along with ears stopped, and eyes blindfolded, was too wickedly audacious for a federal heart ever to have conceived, or a federal tongue to utter. The members of that party, bold as they were against the enemies of their country, were timid in attacks upon truth, and regarded Washington, as he deserved to be regarded, with a reverence almost idolatrous. And when they have recommended to their countrymen, the principles they would inculcate and the measures they would advocate, as those of Washington, it was not to "involve him in the bitter obloquy they provoked," but to adduce his approbation as a potent argument in favour of that which they deemed essential to their country's good. As to claiming him as of their party, they did this no further than to acknowledge him as their chief, and that he was so we have the distinct evidence of Mr. Tucker himself. He says, (Vol. II. p. 49,) "The legislatures in the several states prepared to support or oppose the course of the administration," (Mr. Adams's,) "according to their respective sentiments, and that of Virginia was looked to with peculiar interest by both parties, because that state was yet the largest in the Union, and the leaders of both parties, *Gen. Washington and Mr. Jefferson*, were to be found among its citizens." This ought to be sufficient to confound Mr. Tucker, and to silence the maligners of the federalists upon this topic of calumny. But the composition of their party, the merit to which they are entitled, and the popularity which they ought to enjoy, are of too much importance to the country, to suffer me to omit, in this place, the citation of much more valuable testimony in their behalf than the unwitting eulogy of Mr. Tucker, or the blind attacks of Mr. Jefferson. Monsieur de Tocqueville, who is generally regarded, and was lately mentioned by Mr. Rives, in the Senate of the United States, as the "most profound and sagacious of all the foreign commentators upon our institutions," says (page 92,) "If America ever approached (for however short a time) that lofty pinnacle of glory to which the proud fancy of its inhabitants is wont to point, it was at the solemn moment at which the power of the nation abdicated, as it were, the empire of the land. All ages have furnished the spectacle of a people struggling with energy to win its independence," &c. &c. "But it is a novelty in the history of society to see a great people turn a calm and scrutinizing eye upon itself, when apprized by the legislature that the wheels of government had stopped; to see it carefully examine the extent of the evil, and patiently wait for two whole years until a remedy was discovered, which it voluntarily adopted without having wrung a tear or a drop of blood from mankind."

Who they were that produced this admirable action and grand result is well known. The same author says of them, (page 157,) "The accession of the federalists to power was, in my opinion, one of the most fortunate incidents which accompanied the formation of the great American Union: they resisted the inevitable propensities of their age and of the country. But whether their theories were good or bad, they had the defect of being inapplicable, as a system, to the society which they professed to govern; and that which occurred under the auspices of Jefferson, must therefore have taken place sooner or later. But

paid to Patrick Henry. He has been offered every thing which they knew he would not accept."

Now although Mr. Jefferson often attempts to prevent the recoil of his slanders on Gen. Washington, by pretending to separate him from his cabinet; representing him, as "misled," "played off," &c. by Hamilton and others, in this case that ridiculous stratagem is eminently unavailing, as Gen. Washington, clearly described as a monarchist in the first sentence, was the very individual who was paying the "court" which is denounced as perfidious in the second. For on the 11th of January, 1796, Gen. Washington wrote to Gen. Lee, who he knew was on the most intimate terms with Mr. Henry, the following note:\*

"My Dear Sir,—Your letter of the 26th ult. has been received, but nothing from you since; which is embarrassing in the extreme; for not only the nomination of Chief Justice, but an associate Judge, and Secretary of War, is suspended on the answer you were to receive from Mr. Henry; and what renders the want of it more to be regretted is, that the first Monday of next month (which happens on the first day of it) is the term appointed by law for the meeting of the Superior Court of the United States, in this city; at which, for particular reasons, the bench ought to be full. I will add no more at present than that I am your affectionate,

"GEO. WASHINGTON."

In a letter to Mr. Madison of the 22nd January, 1797, (Vol. III. p. 347,) Mr. Jefferson says—"I do not believe Mr. Adams wishes war with France; nor do I believe *he will truckle to England as servilely as has been done.*" February 9th, (p. 350,) to James Sullivan. "Still there, I believe, and here, I am sure, the great mass is republican, nor do any of the forms in which the public

their government gave the new republic time to acquire a certain stability, and afterwards to support the rapid growth of the very doctrines which they had combated. A considerable number of their principles were, in point of fact, embodied in the political creed of their opponents; and the federal constitution, which subsists at the present day, is a lasting monument of their patriotism and their wisdom."

If there be any censure mingled with this eulogy, it is that the federalists did not imitate the wisdom of Solon, who framed for his countrymen, as he said, not the best system of laws he could devise, but the best they could bear. Certain it is that the federalists appear to have been more bent upon truly benefitting, than falsely pleasing their countrymen; and it is delightful to perceive that truth is beginning to raise her clear voice in their praise, above the din of party denunciation, and to inscribe their merit upon a fair and lofty monument, the work of their own pure hands and upright minds, which may justly challenge comparison with the noblest labours of mankind. Their successors have but to imitate their virtues and follow their counsels to render its duration as lasting as its design was benevolent,—as its operation has been beneficent,—as its proportions are sublime!

\* In MS.

disposition has been pronounced in the last half dozen years, evince the contrary. All of them, when traced to their true source, have only been evidences of the preponderant popularity of a particular great character. That influence once withdrawn, and our countrymen left to the operation of their unbiassed good sense, I have no doubt we shall see a pretty rapid return of general harmony, and our citizens moving in phalanx in the path of regular liberty, order, and a sacrosanct adherence to the Constitution."

Here the well-earned popularity, the pure and meritorious influence of Gen. Washington, is assigned as the cause of public disorder, of obstruction to liberty, and of the departure of his fellow citizens from the constitution of the country; this too, with the duplicated epithet *sacrosanct* prefixed, by the very man who two years before had countenanced the western insurrection, and had vehemently declared that the Constitution, against the dominion of which it was directed, authorized the enactment of "an infernal law."

In a letter to Gen. Gates, of the 30th of May, (p. 354,) Mr. Jefferson draws the following parallel between the policy of General Washington, and that of the contemporaneous British ministry. "I wish any events could induce us to cease to copy such a model, and to assume the dignity of being original. They had their paper systems, stock-jobbing, speculations, public debt, monied interest, &c., and all this was contrived for us. They raised their cry against Jacobins and revolutionists; we against democratic societies and anti-federalists; their alarmists sounded insurrection, ours marched an army to look for one, but could not find it." In a letter to Col. Burr of the 17th June, (p. 357,) from which a passage has been already extracted,\* he denounces "the ungrateful predilection" of Washington for Great Britain, although, as you will remember, in his letter to Mr. Van Buren he declares, that the objectionable measures of the general government during his period, were dictated not by the Executive, but by majorities in the two Houses of Congress.

The same offensive spirit breaks out in a letter to Arthur Campbell; (Vol. III. p. 364,) and still more invidiously in one to Mr. Madison, (p. 373.) In the first, dated the 1st of September, 1797, six months subsequent to President Washington's retirement from office, Mr. Jefferson in reference to the federal party thus exults in the success of his efforts to lessen Washington's popularity; "Hitherto their influence and their system have been irresistible, and they have raised up an executive power which is too strong for the legislature. But I flatter myself they have passed their zenith. The people, while these things were doing, were lulled into rest and security from a cause which no longer exists. No prepossessions now will shut their ears to truth. They begin to see to what port their leaders were steering during their slumbers," &c. In the

\* See Letter III.

second, of the 15th of February, 1798, the following language is held. "A great ball is to be given here on the 22nd, and in other great towns of the Union. This is, at least, very indelicate, and probably excites uneasy sensations in some. I see in it however this useful deduction, that the birth days which have been kept, have been, not those of the President, but of the General;" and again, to the same, March 2nd, (p. 377,) "The late birth-night has certainly *sown tares* among the exclusive federalists. The sincerely Adamsites did not go. The Washingtonians went religiously, and took the secession of the others in high dudgeon. The one sect threatens to desert the levées, the other, the parties. The Whigs went in numbers, to encourage the idea that the birth-nights hitherto kept had been for the General, and not the President, and of course, that time would bring an end to them." From this we are to understand, that the Adamsites who kept aloof, were the sound grain, and the friends who out of respect and veneration for Washington, attended the birth-night ball, were the *chaff*, of the federal party. For, independently of the obvious meaning of the terms, among these last, were Hamilton, Jay, Knox, and all those, whom Mr. Jefferson had stigmatised as unprincipled politicians, as Monarchists, Anglomen, and Corruptionists; and in his letter to Mr. Madison, (already quoted, p. 347,) he had declared his belief that Mr. Adams would make a better president than Gen. Washington had been—"would not truckle to England as servilely as had been done."

It appears indeed, that he could not behold without chagrin and envy, this harmless evidence of popular respect for the services of the citizen whose wisdom and authority had sustained our government, tottering between the pressure of domestic factions, and foreign belligerents, from the tender weakness of infancy, to a state of regular and independent action.

On the 26th November, 1798, in writing to John Taylor, Mr. Jefferson says, (p. 404,) "It is a singular phenomenon, that while our state governments are the very *best in the world*, without exception or comparison, our general government has in the rapid course of nine or ten years, become more arbitrary, and swallowed more of the public liberty, than even that of England." Of these nine or ten years, thus devoted to the extension of arbitrary power, and to the destruction of liberty, Gen. Washington's presidency occupied eight. In accordance with this egregious slander, is his aspersion in a letter to Robert R. Livingston, offering him, by a ludicrous precipitation, the post of Secretary of the Navy, before he himself had been elected President, (p. 445.) "Come forward, then, my dear sir, and give us the aid of your talents, and the weight of your character, towards the new establishment of republicanism; for hitherto we have seen only its travestie."

Throughout all these bitter revilings and extravagant misrepresentations of this illustrious patriot, and the other able statesmen

who had preceded Mr. Jefferson, in the direction of the public councils, it is worthy of remark, that he never makes the smallest allowance for the novel, difficult, and complicated circumstances by which they were surrounded; many of the embarrassments proceeding from which, had been created or increased by his own investigations.

President Washington did not find a government in regular and healthful operation—the route of its march opened and levelled—the play of its functions easy from custom, and determined by example. He had not to maintain public credit, but to originate it—he had not to preserve foreign relations, so much as to establish them—he had less to cherish than to create our commerce—and instead of keeping the bordering savages at peace, he had to repel their frequent and murderous inroads. The first operation was the more difficult, from the heavy depreciated debt for which the nation was bound, both to foreign and domestic creditors. The second, from the furious and uncompromising war then raging between France and England—placing us, between the anger of recent hostility on one side, and the arrogance of recent assistance on the other—one or both of which relations, contributed directly to endanger our commerce, and to excite the Western Indians to war.

The peculiar difficulty which attended Gen. Washington's civil career, of having not only, like his successors, to obey the constitution in his measures, but practically to interpret it, is illustrated by two facts, recorded by Marshall. From this author we learn, that President Washington, after consulting his cabinet, at the head of which was Mr. Jefferson himself, determined to request the advice of the judges of the Supreme Court as to the proper exposition to be given to the treaties then existing between France and the United States: and that the judges—having after much deliberation, intimated that they considered themselves inhibited by the Constitution from counselling or deciding in their official character on political questions, or on any questions not brought before them in the recognised forms, and regular progress of legal controversy—the President acquiesced in this opinion and acted without their advice.\* Afterwards, while Mr. Jefferson was still his prime minister, when the yellow fever was desolating Philadelphia, Washington consulted his cabinet upon the propriety of appointing by proclamation, some other place for the meeting of congress—but finding it was considered that such a step, however desirable its object, would lead him beyond the limits prescribed by the Constitution to the executive power, he promptly receded from it.†

Thus we see that though placed in a situation unprecedented and perplexing, Washington's errors of opinion, never suffered to degenerate into faults of practice, were sources of benefit to his country by becoming monuments of instruction to his successors.

\* Marshall, Vol. V. pp. 433, to 441.

† Marshall, Vol. V. p. 467.

For a citizen, who, like Washington, had inscribed his patriotism on the annals of his country in characters enduring as the race of man, to have every supposed error of his policy, or inadvertence of his judgment while operating in a region of government thus new and unexplored, attributed, not to want of experience, or fallibility of reason, but to want of principle or obliquity of purpose, is surely the height of injustice. Yet from the time Mr. Jefferson retired from the cabinet, until Gen. Washington laid down his office, and indeed, until he resigned his breath, we find this system of censure pursued towards him by his professed friend; and his measures after being distorted in their character, sneered at as to their motives, and misrepresented in their consequences; ascribed *altogether* to flagitious designs, of which he is described either as the stupid instrument, or the guilty projector. Was not, then, Gen. Lee justified, let me again ask, in apprising Gen. Washington of this secret defamation, of this ungenerous detraction, this ungrateful slander and hypocritical friendship—of which his character, his fame, and through these, the interest and reputation of his country were the victims? Was he not required to do it, by the political sympathy and personal friendship he felt for Gen. Washington? Moreover, was he not provoked to it by the unjust attacks which Mr. Jefferson made on a great public measure which, sanctioned by Washington, Gen. Lee had himself conducted, to the satisfaction of the government, the advantage of the nation, and the honour of humanity?

To the remaining ribaldry against Gen. Lee in the letter to Gen. Washington of June the 19th, 1796, it may be thought unnecessary to revert—seeing that it is not above the lowest Billingsgate, in language, is totally destitute of foundation in fact, and as far as it consists of assertion, possesses but the doubtful credit of its author, which now

“Like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.”

But the name of Mr. Jefferson, before the appearance of his Writings, stood like a lofty pillar, and threw its shadow far over our land. Until his assertions and opinions were collected together, and could be examined comparatively by the public eye, there was no hope of resisting his statements, or of appealing from his censure. This domineering influence however ill-founded, cannot be dissipated in a moment, even by the all-pervading light of truth; and although it be perfectly clear that his book will eventually overlay his reputation, the popular mind will yet for a season incline with reverence to his authority, and repeat the echoes of his slander, as the rocks that overhang the sea, are said to retain in their caverns the sound of the tempest after it has passed.

I shall therefore proceed to notice these imputations; and though very briefly, at much more length than they deserve.

The first is that Gen. Lee had “sinned against Gen. Wash-

ton." No fact is alleged or even alluded to, in support of this. In contradiction of it are these well known facts at least; that subsequently to the date of this assertion, Gen. Washington, when empowered to select general officers for the army he consented to command, when all the military fame he had acquired in the revolution was to be hazarded in a new contest, and as was supposed with the conqueror of Italy, placed Gen. Lee higher *in the line of the army*, than any of the revolutionary lieutenant-colonels, although he was the youngest of those whom he designated: and that when becoming sensible of Mr. Jefferson's pernicious schemes and dangerous popularity, he determined to exercise his influence in opposition to them, he persuaded Gen. Lee, the man whom he knew Mr. Jefferson hated and slandered, to become again a candidate for Congress, and exerted himself in the last days of his life to promote his election.\* To these it may be added, that when that illustrious life was closed, Gen. Lee was selected in conformity with a resolution of Congress, and with the concurrence of Mr. Jefferson himself, not only as the most eloquent but the most intimate of Gen. Washington's friends, to pronounce, in a funeral oration, his country's honour, and his country's grief, for 'the *man*, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens.'†

The second imputation is, that Gen. Lee had made attempts at a confidential intercourse with Mr. Jefferson—which by the latter was declined. Admitting this to be true, it only shows the consciousness of sinister and shameful designs on the part of Mr. Jefferson. For as Gen. Lee was the intimate personal friend of Washington, Hamilton, Marshall, Madison, Patrick Henry, Rufus King, and of almost every eminent man in the United States; had been distinguished both in military and civil life; and to say the least in his favour, was remarked for fine address, and engaging conversation, there could not possibly be any *honest* reason for declining his advances.

The third denounces him as a *tergiversator*; which is so remote from the truth, so repugnant to the uniform consistency with which he supported the policy of Washington and opposed the schemes of Mr. Jefferson, that it may be passed by as a falsehood self-evident, susceptible neither of belief nor refutation.

The fourth and last is, that he was not a man of truth, and was therefore unworthy of the public stations he had held.

In reply to the first part of this slander, I shall merely observe, that he maintained during life, the reputation of a man of truth, in spite of Mr. Jefferson's clandestine imputation to the contrary,

\* Marshall alludes to this circumstance, Vol. V. p. 760, but as Gen. Washington made the same demonstration of attachment and respect for himself, mentions no names.

† Marshall, Vol. V. pp. 770-71.

and left among *his writings* nothing to convict him after death of deceit or falsehood; and that he manifested in his language on all occasions, peculiar delicacy for the feelings and reputation of others, as all men of all parties who knew him, will testify. In the instance in which Mr. Jefferson contradicts him, it has been, I think you will allow me to say, *demonstrated* that he strictly adhered to the truth, while Mr. Jefferson himself abandoned most sadly, friendship, honour, gratitude, and veracity. And in regard to the second part, that Gen. Lee was unworthy of the offices he had held, I venture to affirm, and shall undertake to prove, that besides being a disinterested servant of the public, he was in proportion to his opportunities, a more efficient, a more devoted, and a more useful one than Mr. Jefferson.

Their public lives may each be divided into two periods; the first anterior to the conclusion of the Revolution, and the second subsequent to it; and they may be respectively regarded under two aspects—one composed of the services they rendered, the other of the faults they committed. This mode of estimation will be fair, simple, and perspicuous—and will leave no room, it is hoped, either for the indulgence of partiality, or for what would be worse, the gratification of resentment.

P. S. After I had finished this letter, the Paris newspapers of the 20th and 21st of Sept. were put into my hands. From them it appears that Gen. Sebastiani, in a debate in the Chamber of Deputies on the 19th, mentioned as a fact, that Gen. Washington died unpopular in the United States. In a continuation of the same debate the next day, Gen. La Fayette is reported to have replied, that as to Washington, ‘he died in the enjoyment of all his popularity.’ This is certainly a mistake on the part of Gen. La Fayette, as will occur to you not only from the perusal of this letter, but from what is said on the same subject in the sixth of this series; especially from the facts taken from Marshall, that Gen. Washington had to defend himself against a charge of peculation, and that his impeachment was publicly suggested by the partisans of Mr. Jefferson. It may upon the whole be said, therefore, that while it was impossible to eradicate from the hearts of the people, that *affection* which Washington’s virtues and services inspired, his *popularity*, the desire of the people to see him at the head of affairs, which was naturally the fruit of their affection and confidence, had been blighted by the arts and calumnies of Mr. Jefferson.

## LETTER IX.

WHEN the battle of Lexington was fought and the war of the Revolution may be said to have commenced, Mr. Jefferson was thirty-two years of age; and following his autobiography, which is certainly not abstemious in regard to self-praise, it appears that after having been elected to the House of Burgesses, being a member of several patriotic associations, and assisting in the adoption of various measures of incipient resistance to the government of the mother country, he was appointed a member of the Congress of 1775, as a substitute for Peyton Randolph, who was constrained by other public duties to retire from that body. Having drawn up the answer of the Virginia House of Burgesses to Lord North's conciliatory propositions, he repaired to Philadelphia, and took his seat in Congress in the month of June; when being appointed a member of the committee charged with preparing a report on the same propositions, the answer which he had already produced in Virginia, being shaped for the occasion, was approved by his colleagues and accepted by Congress. As member of another committee, he prepared a report on the causes which had determined the Colonies to take up arms, which being rejected by Congress, was substituted by one from the pen of Mr. Dickinson. His next performance was the declaration of independence, which, after considerable alterations suggested by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, was adopted, and remains the principal monument of his revolutionary fame.

Retiring from Congress in the Autumn of 1778, probably with a view of being appointed Governor of Virginia, he got into the Legislature of that State. He there prepared the bills for establishing courts of justice, for cutting off entails, and for preventing the further importation of slaves—the two last certainly wise and important in principle. That for cutting off entails, however, was of obvious necessity from the form of our new institutions, and the prevailing temper of the people, and had only to be proposed by any member, in order to be adopted by a large majority, as it was in others of the States. The law against the importation of slaves though recommended by every consideration of humanity, justice, and sound policy, was a dead letter during a war in which our ports and harbours were all blockaded, and in which the question at issue was our national existence—our capacity, in short, to make laws. He was also the author of the Law of Descents, by which the Gothic and aristocratical right of primogeniture was abolished—a corollary from his previous law on the subject of entails. In

the early efforts to secure a perfect freedom of religious opinion in Virginia, by abolishing the colonial establishment, he took a leading and zealous part. He suggested the removal of the seat of government from Williamsburg to Richmond, as a position less exposed to the enemy and more within the means of defence. He proposed to the Legislature of Virginia a revision of the laws of that State, and being appointed one of five commissioners for the purpose, assigns to himself the principal part of the task and of the credit. He was next elected Governor, an office from which he retired after holding it about two years. Here seems to terminate the list of his revolutionary labours and honours, and of the stations in which these were enjoyed, and those performed.

As he neither suggested nor maintained in debate any of the measures which were adopted by Congress—participated in none of the anxious and solemn discussions of that body; supported neither the motion for declaring the Colonies independent, nor the particular form of declaration that was adopted; and was silent in the deliberations on the articles of confederation, in the character of which his State was vitally interested, his chief title to remembrance as a delegate, rests on the authorship of the declaration of independence.

Whatever degree of credit may be claimed for this production, this credit is evidently subject, as far as Mr. Jefferson is concerned, to one abatement at least—that of its having undergone no little amendment, and a most abundant pruning in committee, by both which operations it was greatly improved. As it stands, it is no doubt an excellent state paper, conceived with judgment and expressed with solemnity. But it exhibits none of the higher powers of composition, and though suited to the great occasion, was not equal to it; displaying neither extraordinary vigour of thought, elevation of sentiment, nor elegance of language. It may be said to consist of four parts—the exordium, the argument, the narration, and the conclusion. Without questioning the propriety of this arrangement, it may be observed of the first part, that it is in point of conception natural and appropriate. The second is derived altogether from Locke's Essay on Civil Government, which was then the text book of our statesmen. No great intellectual exertion was required to refer to or employ the principles and reasoning of which this division of the paper consists. The third and longest part is neither more nor less than a list of grievances, with which every public man in the country was but too familiar. These, it must be confessed, are not skilfully arranged—they are strung together like the items of an account, and have little of that consecutive force and energetic dependence, which a great composer would have given them. The conclusion is the best part, but owes the warmth and dignity into which it rises, entirely to the amendments of the committee. Mr. Jefferson by his own showing had degraded it into a close analogy with the warranty

clause of a legal conveyance; as in the following passage—"these States reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the kings of Great Britain, and all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them."

The style, deficient in propriety, is chargeable with a plethora of words. The opening paragraph has been the subject of much praise, and is a favourable specimen of the composition. But it is liable to obvious objections. It is as follows:—"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation." The words "in the course of human events," after "when," are tautological; and the epithet *human* excessively so. What is more, they imply that we became independent in the ordinary course of things, and not by a magnanimous and perilous resolution to revolt from extraordinary oppression. "The political bands which have connected them," is a verbose and awkward periphrasis of *connexion*; embodies, unnecessarily, a metaphorical vulgarity; and is not suited to the verb, "*dissolve*." We *break* "bands"—we *dissolve* connexions. The word "separate" in the succeeding line is clearly redundant, its meaning being comprehended in the *dissolution of connexion*. "Equal" is an expletive; for the postulate, that all sovereigns are equal had been too often granted to acquire strength by repetition. The phrase, "Nature's God," conveys a vagueness of religious sentiment, a heathenish puerility, out of all keeping with the awful crisis for which the document was prepared. "Decent respect" implies the possibility of *indecent respect*; and *decent* is moreover a drawback on the substantive to which it is prefixed, besides creating a useless occasion for the article "a." The expression "A respect to the opinions" is not sanctioned by usage. When followed by *to*, respect means *reference, relation*. When it signifies *esteem*, or *reverence*, it is succeeded by *for*. In the concluding member of the sentence, the word "causes," is used in a moral sense, as synonymous with *reasons*; in which sense it cannot be elegantly connected with the verb "*impel*." This connexion involves a metaphysical error. *Passions* impel the mind; *reasons* determine it—as in the following line of Pope:—

"Now calmed by *reason*, now by *rage* impelled."

Besides the disagreement between a sense of *mental impulsion*, and the state of *tranquil progression*, presupposed by the words "when in the course of human events," this language is inconsistent with the history of the occasion—with that sensitive but enduring patriotism, and that roused but deliberate resentment, out of

which the resolution to declare independence grew; and which are implied in the body of the declaration itself.

These remarks are sufficient to show that in respect to the exordium, in which the great masters of style exert their utmost art to arrive at brief simplicity of language, a loss of words would be a gain of strength and beauty, and that the paragraph in question, which has been so much lauded, by being very much abridged, would be very much improved. As for example—"When it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve their political connexion with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the station to which, by the laws of nature and of God, they are entitled, respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes of their separation." Thus in that single sentence, consisting of seventy-one words, seventeen, or about one-fourth, are worse than useless. In the same proportion, and to equal advantage, the entire composition might be abridged.

I hazard these observations, not from a desire to detract from the real merit of this memorable state paper, but to convince you that the renown with which it has encircled the name of its author, is *altogether* owing to the success of the revolution; to the gallantry, talent, fortitude, and virtue of the very men whom he bitterly and incessantly reviled and slandered. Whoever reads it must be prepared to admit that if our struggle for independence had failed—if we had experienced the fate of unhappy Poland—had been resubjected by the fleets and armies of England, that if Washington had been less wise, magnanimous, and incorruptible, Hamilton less sagacious, ardent, and intrepid, Lee less skilful, undaunted, and enterprising, this composition, which is now the corner stone of Mr. Jefferson's glory, would have slept amid the kindred lumber of some pamphleteer's shelf, and been there forgotten. Will posterity think of inquiring for the author of the late Polish Manifesto—or would every heart in the United States beat with gratitude and love at the name of La Fayette, if his exertions in defence of our liberty had consisted in writing the declaration of independence?\*

[\* For further abatement of the fame which Mr. Jefferson has derived from the authorship of that document, see an admirable article in the New York Review, upon Tucker's Life of Jefferson. The writer of it seems not to have been completely satisfied that Mr. Jefferson was the author of the preamble to the old constitution of Virginia, which (the constitution) was certainly the work of George Mason; whose Bill of Rights was for a long time claimed by the *Simon Pures* of Jeffersonianism to be the production of their patron. Most of Mr. Mason's papers were unfortunately burnt up with his dwelling-house in which he left them; and anxious as I feel to contribute my mite towards doing justice to one who did so much for his country, I have to regret that the very limited researches I have been able to make on this subject, have been entirely unsuccessful. But the reviewer has clearly shown that the preamble above mentioned, the Mecklenburg Declaration, and the Virginia bill of Rights contain nearly every thing of importance in that document, upon which rests so much of Mr. Jefferson's fame. Of this latter instrument and the Meck-

As a legislator, in the contracted sphere of our State government, Mr. Jefferson is entitled to substantial credit. The principles on which he proceeded were sound, and the objects he pursued just and useful. They were, however, enforced by the circumstances of the times, and by suggestions of obvious fitness which attracted the attention of others as well as himself. Similar measures were contemporaneously adopted in other States; and if time were taken to unfold completely the legislative history of that period, we should find the figure of Mr. Jefferson, which, viewed alone, and through his own "optic glass" seems colossal, diminished to a size inferior to that of many of his contemporaries.

His bill for establishing a perfect liberty of conscience, could hardly have been enunciated, much less explained and supported, without drawing upon Locke, who in his *letters on toleration*, had exhausted the subject. Of the merit of his revision of the Laws of Virginia I am not capable of forming an opinion, but I well remember to have heard the most accomplished lawyer† of that State observe, that for luminous order of arrangement, precision and perspicuity of expression, Mr. Pendleton's part of the work was most to be admired.

As a lawgiver, Mr. Jefferson was far inferior to a man, whom, in popular favour and public honours, he greatly outstripped. This man was George Mason. There is more wisdom, more condensation of thought and energy of reason, in one single clause of the Virginia bill of rights, from the pen of that truly great man, than in all the writings of Mr. Jefferson put together.

This clause is as follows—"That no man or set of men is entitled to exclusive or separate emoluments, or privileges from the community, but in consideration of public services; which not being descendible, neither ought the offices of magistrate, legislature, or judge to be hereditary." Here is a volume of truth and wisdom, a lesson for the study of nations, embodied in a single sentence, and expressed in the plainest language. If a deluge of despotism were to overspread the world, and destroy those institutions under which freedom is yet protected, sweeping into oblivion every vestige of their remembrance among men, could this single sentence of Mason be preserved, it would be sufficient to re-kindle

lenburg Declaration, Mr. Tucker says, (Vol. II. p. 417,) "Every one must be persuaded, at least all who have been minute observers of style, that one of these papers has borrowed from the other; but contends, at great *length*, that Mr. Jefferson was not the plagiary. Of the *force* of his argument, however, I cannot be so positive. The reader may fairly judge of it from the following sentence (p. 419,) if he will bear in mind what has just been said in the text of the strong resemblance which the conclusion of Mr. Jefferson's own document bears to the warranty clause of a deed. "If nothing else had prevented it," (Mr. Jefferson's borrowing from the Mecklenburg Declaration,) "his objection to the *legal phraseology* would have been insuperable."!]

† John Wickham.

the flame of liberty, and to revive the race of freemen. Whereas, the Declaration of Independence contains not a sentiment, principle or argument, not a solitary idea or combination of thought, that may not be found almost *totidem verbis*, in Locke's political works, or in various state papers and patriotic effusions of the Revolution, and that had not been repeatedly urged in the debates on the great question of Independence; which its author neither proposed nor supported in Congress, and failed signally to maintain in the field.

As Governor of Virginia, the world had supposed him particularly delinquent from three facts—one, that he suffered his capital, though remote from the sea, and inaccessible to fleets, to fall an unresisting prey to a detachment of nine hundred men; another, that a motion to impeach him for this pusillanimity was laid before the legislature of Virginia by a member of ability and reputation; and a third, that he retired from the governorship (under the weight of this charge) in a premature and unprecedented manner. Mr. Jefferson himself is quite of a different opinion; considers his flight from Richmond as constituting a great era in our republic, as a sort of political Hegira; and his *escapade* to Carter's Mountain, as an ascent into the seventh heaven of patriotic perfection, establishing in his favour a claim to the increased infatuation, and more ardent idolatry of his worshippers.

As this is the most characteristic point in his career, reveals not only the nature of the spell which he cast over the public mind, but his own confidence in its endurance and tenacity—and as moreover it embraces his second and distinct attack upon Gen. Lee, I shall neither abuse your patience nor transgress the limits of my undertaking, by devoting to it some attention.

The subject is repeatedly referred to in his "Writings," but the name of Gen. Lee is connected with it only in a letter to Mr. Monroe of the 1st of January, 1815, (Vol. IV. p. 246.) "I much regretted your acceptance of the war department—not that I know a person who I think would better conduct it. But conduct it ever so wisely, it will be a sacrifice of yourself. Were an angel from heaven to undertake that office, all our miscarriages would be ascribed to him.\* Raw troops, no troops, insubordinate militia, want of arms, want of money, want of provisions, all will be charged to want of management in you;—I speak from experience. When I was Governor of Virginia—without a regular in the State, and scarcely a musket to put into the hands of the militia, invaded by two armies, Arnold's from the seaboard and Cornwallis's from

\* Yet in this very letter to Mr. Monroe, he had himself just been guilty of this injustice towards Gen. Armstrong—of which from experience he spoke so feelingly—saying in relation to the battle of Bladensburg and the capture of Washington, "I never doubted that the plans of the President were wise and sufficient. Their failure we all impute, 1st, to the insubordinate temper of Armstrong," who was then Secretary of War.

the southward, when we were driven from Richmond and Charlottesville, and every member of my council fled to their homes; it was not the total destitution of means but the mismanagement of them which in the querulous voice of the public caused all our misfortunes. It ended, indeed, in the capture of the whole hostile force, but not till means were brought us by Gen. Washington's army and the French fleet and army. And although the legislature, who were personally acquainted with both the means and measures, acquitted me with justice and thanks, yet Gen. Lee has put all these imputations among the romances of his historical novel, for the amusement of credulous and uninquisitive readers."

Now the fact is, that Gen. Lee, in a work of two octavo volumes, touches but in two chapters on the operations in Virginia during Mr. Jefferson's governorship, and in these, very briefly. The censure that his work reflects on the management of affairs in that State applies, as well as I can recollect, to two points only, the want of due preparation for the defence of the capital, in the shape of a regular force, and the mischievous inutility of removing the arms, stores, &c. to the distance of a bowshot from Richmond, instead of carrying them out of the enemy's reach, or employing them in opposing his advance.

The first of these reflections regarded rather the legislature than the governor, and the second was as faint and indulgent a disapprobation as any allusion to the subject would justify. Gen. Lee might have expatiated on Mr. Jefferson's flight, or have recorded the motion for his impeachment; but because neither of these odious subjects were essential to his work, he avoided them. A generous mildness, for which, Mr. Jefferson, considering how differently he had treated Gen. Lee, ought really to have felt grateful.

Though he never reclaimed against "Lee's Memoirs" publicly, I had heard he was dissatisfied, and therefore took occasion, in preparing a second edition, to call his attention to the passage relating to Arnold's invasion of Virginia, offering to place in a note or appendix any remarks he might think proper to make—reserving at the same time expressly, the right of accompanying their insertion with such observations as they might appear to authorize. He sent me in reply a journal of Arnold's reported progress and of his own proceedings, and while he acknowledged that he possessed no copy of Gen. Lee's work, undertook to correct his account of another military operation in the State—which correction turned out to be inapplicable, as Gen. Lee's narration corresponded precisely with Mr. Jefferson's. Perceiving that this contribution tended not in the least to invalidate Gen. Lee's reflections on Arnold's invasion, I found myself relieved on publishing it, from the necessity of annexing any material remarks.

The historical work of Gen. Lee, which Mr. Jefferson here stigmatises as *romantic*, is a personal recital of events of the revolu-

tionary war in which he was concerned, interspersed with reflections on the conduct of the adverse commanders, and with allusions to such other operations as were necessary to impart consistency and clearness to his narration. In composing it he resorted to his own memory, assisted by notes that he took at the time the chief events he relates were passing, and by the letters and orders of his commanding officers, Gens. Washington, Greene, and La Fayette. But he did not rely altogether even on these resources. He called to his aid the recollection of his surviving comrades; by whose testimony, his statements of fact are supported. Gen. Pickens, Gen. Stevens, Col. Howard, Col. Carrington, Col. Davie, Major Pendleton, and Major Eggleston, were among his principal contributors. The scenes of the operations he describes, lay chiefly in the States of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, to the north; the Carolinas and Georgia to the south. In nearly all these operations he was himself an actor, while to all except those he slightly alludes to in Virginia, Mr. Jefferson was a total stranger. Yet caricaturing the public impression that various incidents in which Gen. Lee was engaged, his stratagems, his enterprises, his sieges, and marches are fraught with a romantic interest, and indulging his long-borne malice, this unwarlike politician,

“Who never set a squadron in the field,”

denounces with oracular decision the entire work to be a mere “historical novel.” A man who under such circumstances, could hazard this assertion, must have valued his own credit very little, or the judgment of his friend less.

Among the deficiencies for which he alleges that he was made blameable, Mr. Jefferson includes a want of arms; when it is apparent from his own statement (Vol. I. pp. 201-2, and Vol. IV. pp. 39, 40,) that he had cannon, muskets, powder, and “military stores” generally, in abundance. For he admits that his agents were at least four days and nights employed in removing, or as he has it, *wagoning*, “the military stores” from Richmond, in order to save them from Arnold; and that after “nearly the whole of the arms” had been conveyed across James River, the enemy destroyed three hundred muskets at Richmond, besides a variety of stores, and at Westham recovered five brass field pieces which he had had sunk in the river, and threw as many tons of powder into the canal. This looks more like a superfluity than a “destitution of means.”

He represents the State as invaded by Arnold from the “sea-board,” and Lord Cornwallis from the south at the same time; whereas Arnold entered Richmond on the 5th of January, and Cornwallis did not penetrate the southern frontier of the State until about the middle of May following. But the most *romantic* part of his “historical novel” is the assertion that the mismanagement imputed to him “ended indeed in the capture of the whole

hostile force, but not till means were brought us by Gen. Washington's army, and the French fleet and army." Now when this combination of events happened, Mr. Jefferson had, for more than three months, ceased to be Governor, and so far from being among the us who met the assistance of those martial men, Washington, Rochambeau, and De Grasse, was residing on his estate in Bedford, two hundred miles from the theatre of war, lying under the motion for his impeachment, and nibbling at a negotiation with its mover in order to elude a prosecution.

As to the legislature "*acquitting him with justice and thanks,*" it is sufficient to observe at present, that inasmuch as he was never tried, he could not have been acquitted; so that the award of justice which he modestly appropriates in his own favour, was never pronounced. A resolution of thanks indeed passed the General Assembly in the winter subsequent to the surrender of Cornwallis, which, besides being under circumstances that gave it a very equivocal character, was in terms which carefully excluded any reference to his military conduct.

So much for his statement to Mr. Monroe. A more elaborate one is found at page 39 of his fourth volume, in the shape of an extract from his journal, from the 31st December, 1780, to the 11th of January, 1781, both inclusive, a summary of certain succeeding events, and a defence of his own proceedings. It appears to have been prepared in the year 1805, and to be in answer to the strictures of a Mr. Turner, an intelligent citizen of Virginia. Its main drift is to prove that from the rapidity with which Arnold's detachment was conveyed by the British fleet from the mouth of the Chesapeake to Westover, twenty-five miles from Richmond, (where they disembarked and indicated that Richmond and not Petersburg was their object) it was impracticable to oppose their advance, cut off their retreat, or save the stores and records.

Upon a point of conduct like this, opinions may reasonably differ; but although there is no standard of duty, there are two principles by which a firm and patriotic officer will govern himself on such occasions. One is, not to despair; and the other, is to leave nothing unattempted in defence of the Commonwealth. By these principles Jackson was animated, when under circumstances of far greater gloom and peril, he attacked a force much superior to his own, the moment it landed below New Orleans.

From Marshall\* we learn that Arnold's party (which was composed chiefly of American deserters†) consisted of nine hundred men, that a few militia were detached to harass and retard them, and that in the mean time, exertions were made to remove the public stores, records, &c. to Westham. From Mr. Jefferson's

\* Vol. IV. p. 389.

† Lee's Memoirs—the chapter in which Champe's attempt to take Arnold is related. It is referred to from memory.

report to Gen. Washington, (Vol. I. p. 202,) it appears there were at least two hundred militia, embodied at Richmond, the day the enemy entered and took possession of it, and that there was no want of arms and ammunition. But it is confessed by himself, that never venturing to reconnoitre the enemy, he gave at once into the exaggeration which estimated them at sixteen hundred men. He did not even accompany the party which attempted to oppose them, but by preparing from the first, for flight, infected with fear, the community which he should have inspired with confidence. Had he put arms in the hands of the people he employed in "*wagoning*" muskets from one place of exposure to another, united them with the two hundred embodied militia, mounted a proper proportion of the party on the wagon horses, and awakened the patriotism and spirit of his men, by putting himself at their head, he might have effectually checked the progress of Arnold, on the strong and wood-covered hills, which embanking a succession of obstructing creeks, break abruptly on the river below Richmond. On this ground, three hundred men, expert in the use of fire-arms, as our people are, with a resolute leader, stationed behind trees, favoured by commanding positions, and furnished with light field pieces, were sufficient not only to impede, but to defeat Arnold, who had but thirty horse, and had no cannon. The American force would have increased in number and spirit every hour; while the enemy, their men mostly deserters, and their leader with a rope around his neck, would have as rapidly declined; and there can be little doubt that the least serious opposition upon this, his first parricidal attempt, would have hurried Arnold back to his ships.

The war in which we were then engaged, furnished examples that should not have been lost on the Governor of Virginia. At Bunker's Hill a thousand ill-armed militia, in an uncovered position, taken up by mistake; though enfiladed by batteries on land, and exposed to the broadsides of several frigates, twice repulsed the attack of three thousand veteran troops, led up to the muzzles of their guns, by Gens. Howe and Clinton; and gave way before a third attack, not till their ammunition was exhausted, and the ground they fought on was heaped with slain. Gen. Lee, whom Mr. Jefferson thought so undeserving public confidence, had, when a Captain, with only ten men, and in an unfortified house, repulsed Tarleton at the head of two hundred men, although attacked by surprise and at the most discouraging hour, according to Napoleon, of the twenty-four. This same Gen. Lee, you will remember, when at the head of fifteen thousand men, and seconded by Gens. Morgan, Mifflin, and Smith, Mr. Jefferson was of opinion might not only have been successfully opposed, but actually cut off, by a thousand "men at their ploughs," "in a thousand places in the Alleghany;" although like Mr. Jefferson, these insurgents were "unprepared by their line of life and education," for war.

Had Mr. Jefferson failed in a resolute effort to defend his capital, his misfortune, though lamented, would not have been blamed. It was patriotic spirit, not military skill, that was required of him. But it is impossible to conceive that he was not censurable, for avoiding that degree of personal danger to which an attempt to defend the dignity and interest of the commonwealth he had undertaken to govern, would have exposed him. So far from acting up to the crisis, he never faced the enemy or even observed him; and until he ascertained that Arnold had retreated to his ships, kept himself behind the current of a broad and unfordable river, flitting from place to place, hiding his guns, innocent things! lest the enemy should shoot at *them*; and sheltering them, against another war, it would seem, from the pitiless rains!\* During all this time, even when Gen. Phillips had succeeded Tarleton, he affirms, with an appearance of truth, too, he never assumed a guard, was often "in four, five, or six miles" of the enemy, with nothing but James river to protect him. But counting the river and the distance for nothing, the solitary *incognito* which the Governor adopted, was a complete protection from danger, and shows that in order to secure that inestimable advantage, he rendered himself as useless and obscure as any private citizen who kept out of harm's way.

On the morning of the 8th, when it was *certain* that Arnold had retreated to Westover, Governor Jefferson ventured across the river, and returned in safety to Richmond. At this time he states that a force of two thousand three hundred militia were collected under Gens. Steuben, Nelson, and George Rogers Clarke, with a view of attacking Arnold, or at least preventing his ravages. Yet he never put himself at the head of these parties, nor encouraged them by his presence, nor participated in their efforts to annoy the enemy.

He retained his station as Governor of Virginia, until the ensuing June, during which interval, his native state, the destinies of which were committed to his care, infested by two hostile invasions, and overrun by the horrors of conflagration and slaughter, had to exert its last fibre of strength in self-defence. Yet he alone, Commander-in-chief of the forces, stood aloof from peril, never ventured within cannon-shot of the foe, and looked on from a distance, while a generous and gallant foreigner,† offered himself to the danger, which our Governor ingloriously shunned.

But this, if we believe him, was not the most reprehensible part

\* Extract from his journal, (Vol. IV. p. 40,) "Finding the arms, &c. in a heap near the shore, and exposed to be destroyed by cannon from the north bank, the governor had them removed under cover of a point of land near by." — "He returned to Britton's, to see further to the arms there, exposed on the ground to heavy rains which had fallen the night before."

† La Fayette, with twelve hundred raw recruits, and a few local militia, by a series of bold and skilful movements, made head against Arnold, Phillips, and Cornwallis in succession, the last at the head of seven thousand men,

of his conduct. By the Constitution of Virginia, as it then stood, you know that the Governor was elected annually, and to secure a prudent rotation in office, the same individual was eligible, three years only out of a term of seven. The usage under this regulation was even then, (and has continued ever since,) that a man being elected the first time, was re-elected the two succeeding years as a matter-of-course, and thus completed his constitutional term. Mr. Jefferson was first elected in June, 1779, (Vol. I. p. 40,) and says he declined a re-election, in other words, virtually resigned, in June, 1781; at a time when Lord Cornwallis with an army of seven thousand men had penetrated into the heart of the State, and with his detachments, under Simcoe and Tarleton, was spreading destruction, if not terror, far and wide. Now, can it be supposed that Gen. Lee, or any other citizen of Virginia—any man, or even any woman, who had drawn her first breath on that soil, would have shrunk from the public service, at such a crisis?

But Mr. Jefferson represents it as an act of laudable diffidence, of patriotic self-denial, assigning as a reason for it, that he was unpractised in arms, and not educated for command, and that therefore conceiving it proper that the military and civil power should be lodged in the same hands, he proposed to his friends in the Legislature, that Gen. Nelson who commanded a division of militia, should be appointed Governor.

This reasoning and this expediency did not occur to Governor Rutledge of South Carolina, nor to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, nor to any of the governors of the other States. The same Arnold, emboldened by his successful irruption into Virginia, invaded Connecticut, entered its chief seaport, massacred its citizens, and ravaged their property; but Governor Trumbull maintained his station and watched with tutelary care over his bleeding country.

Governor Rutledge, when his State was not only overrun, but subjugated by the same Corwallis, instead of declining the office of Governor, assumed that of dictator. He was neither trained to war, nor practised in command, but like Mr. Jefferson had been bred a lawyer, and educated for civil employments. But he never despaired of his little commonwealth; he held fast the ensigns of her sovereignty, and fanned every spark of her patriotism that was left unquenched by the torrents of blood, which, in the agony of unsuccessful valour, she had shed. He organized every effort at resistance, and encouraged every attempt at deliverance, that the public spirit of his countrymen essayed. When driven from Charleston by a powerful armament and a regular siege, and in consequence of a series of defeats, expelled from his state, he made the camp nearest the foe his capital; and although he might have

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during incessant operations, for six months; and until he was joined by Gen. Wayne, and afterwards by Washington.

devolved his responsibility on either of those sons of war, Sumter, Marion, or Pickens, he proudly maintained it, and by his fortitude, exertions, and influence, imparted to their enterprises an efficiency and success, which (had those officers been embarrassed with civil duties) would not have attended them.\*

This conduct secured to Governor Rutledge just and lasting fame. Can it be affirmed, then, that for conduct diametrically opposed to this, in similar circumstances, and in the immediate face of an example so glorious, Mr. Jefferson was entitled to praise, or was not justly obnoxious to censure? He admits, as you perceive in his letter to Mr. Monroe, that his conduct excited public discontent, conveying at the same time the impression that this was the effect of delusion and prejudice. Yet if any man can for a moment doubt the justice of this popular feeling, let him ask himself whether as Governor of Virginia in time of war and invasion, he would make Mr. Jefferson his model?

Be this, however, as it may, Mr. Jefferson declined a re-election from motives of disgraceful unmanliness or self-convicting despair, from pusillanimity past or present—an alternative to which he is confined by his own vindication. If a majority of the people were satisfied with his conduct, and a majority of the legislature willing to re-elect him, his retirement from the honourable station which he had accepted was a greater crime than any with which he was charged. Under such circumstances to desert his post was worse than flying from his capital. But by insisting that the discontent with his conduct was confined (Vol. IV. p. 42,) to "some who blamed every thing done contrary to their own opinions," and that (p. 43) "he therefore himself proposed to his friends in the Legislature that Gen. Nelson, who commanded the militia of the State, should be appointed Governor," he does substantially maintain the two propositions, *that a majority of the people were satisfied with his conduct—and that a majority of the Legislature were willing to re-elect him.* It follows, therefore, that he was upon this hypothesis guilty of "present pusillanimity."

On the other hand, if his declining a re-election was not an act of "present pusillanimity," it must have proceeded from a natural conviction that a man who had fled from the public enemy, as he had done, could not possibly enjoy the public confidence, and that the Legislature could not be expected in a season of alarming invasion, to elect a citizen as Governor to-day whom they were to try under an impeachment to-morrow. This, as he never pretends to dispute the justice of the general sentiment at the time, and lays claim even to a degree of favour with the Legislature which encouraged him to propose his own successor, amounts to a confession, that he had been guilty of "past pusillanimity."

This view of his position is rendered plainer by his efforts to

\* Marshall, Vol. IV. pp. 136, and 44, and 45.

conceal it. In a letter to Gen. Washington of the 28th of May, 1781, (Vol. I. p. 223,) to the skirts of whose esteem he was then clinging for support—and who being on a distant and stormy sea of anxiety and contention, could not be expected to look very closely into the texture of his statements—he announces his approaching retirement in a way designed to persuade him that it was a voluntary and “long declared resolution,” a “relief which the Constitution has prepared for those oppressed with the labours of my office.” But so far from its being in conformity with “a long declared resolution,” he had never mentioned it either in his incessant correspondence with Gen. Washington, in that with the President of Congress, or in his letters to the Virginia delegation. On the contrary, you will find that in this very correspondence he alludes to the management of operations extending to a period far beyond the time proposed for his resignation. For example, on the 10th of May, (Vol. I. p. 220,) he informs the Virginia Delegates in Congress that Gen. Phillips, then a prisoner under the convention of Saratoga, had written a letter to him with this address, “To Thomas Jefferson, American Governor of Virginia.” He adds, “very shortly after, I received as I expected, the permission of the Board of War, for the British Flag vessel, then in Hampton Roads, with clothing and refreshments, to proceed to Alexandria. I enclosed it and addressed it ‘To Wm. Phillips, Esq., commanding the British forces in the commonwealth of Virginia.’ Personally knowing Phillips to be the proudest man of the proudest nation upon earth, I well know he will not open this letter: but having occasion at the same to write to Capt. Gerlach, the flag master, I informed him at the same time that the convention troops in this State should perish for want of necessaries, before any should be carried to them through this State, till Gen. Phillips either swallowed this pill of retaliation or made an apology for his rudeness. *And in this, should the matter come ultimately before Congress, we hope for their support.*” Not to speak of the inhumanity of making the prisoners perish for the folly of Phillips, the state of mind under which this letter was written, the persevering determination, and “ultimate” views which it reveals, exclude the possibility of believing that even as late as the 10th of May, Mr. Jefferson entertained an intention of retiring from office on the first of June. This conclusion is confirmed by himself in a memorandum of a conversation, professed to have been held with Gen. Washington on the 29th of February, 1792, in which he says, “I told him that the circumstance of a perilous war, which brought every thing into danger, and called for all the services which every citizen could render, had induced me to undertake the administration of the government of Virginia.” (Vol. IV. p. 456.)

The deceptive spirit of his letter to Gen. Washington is further betrayed by his jargon about the “relief which the constitution has prepared for those oppressed by the labours of office.” The annual

occurrence of the Governor's election instead of being prepared by the constitution for the purpose of relieving those who were tired of office, was devised expressly for the purpose of getting rid of those Governors of whom, as in the case of Mr. Jefferson, the public was tired. A Governor who was tired of office could resign it when he pleased—a contingency which the constitution foresaw, and had provided for, by declaring that in the event of the *resignation* of the Governor, the oldest member of the Council, should, in the character of Lieut. Governor, perform the executive duties.

But at the date of this letter to Gen. Washington the prospect had changed—the members of the Legislature were beginning to assemble and to collect into a storm the clouds of disapprobation which had risen up against Mr. Jefferson from every quarter of the horizon. By "the moody frontier" of the Legislative "brow," he was at a glance convinced that his impeachment, not his election, was to be the question of debate, and he therefore hastened to inform Gen. Washington, that he was about to prove his patriotism by relinquishing his office into abler hands, and after the exhausting labour of being two years in the prime of his life, Governor of Virginia, in which time and capacity he did nothing but write and run, he was about to seek relief and rest in a private station. Lest this story should startle Gen. Washington, who had himself been unremittingly employed in a far more arduous station, for about six years, he says, this modest and patriotic design had been "long declared;" an assertion which as we have seen it is impossible to believe—and which, if it could have been made with truth, would, in all probability, not have been repeated.

Here the question might naturally be asked, if the pressure of war justified the Governor's abdication in 1781, why he accepted office, or was compelled by the "circumstances of a perilous war to undertake the government," in 1779? His qualifications were certainly not lessened by experience, and it does not appear that he was disabled by wounds—although in a letter written some few years ago, he solemnly assured me that in his campaign against Arnold he actually rode his horse until he sunk under him, and then borrowed an unbroken colt. A material circumstance, however, the bearing of that unfortunate animal, at the time he founded in a hurricane of dust and glory under the "noble horsemanship" of the Commander-in-chief, is not noted in the memorandum with which I was furnished; and is not to be found in the printed *log-book* which has been already referred to. If conjecture were allowable on a subject so important and melancholy, it might, perhaps, be plausibly inferred, from the philosophical temper and retiring patriotism of the Governor throughout this perilous struggle, that at no stage of his memorable career was the horse or the colt in pursuit of Arnold.

As there was no public necessity for Mr. Jefferson's waiting for the expiration of the official year, in order to carry into execution

his "long declared" purpose of retiring; and if, as he insists, the public good required that Gen. Nelson should be appointed Governor, why did not he relinquish his office, as soon as Arnold's approach was announced? When this took place, the Legislature was in session at Richmond, and Gen. Nelson was on the spot. He might then have resigned his office in favour of that brave and devoted patriot with as much modesty and at least as little shame, as he felt or exhibited six months afterwards; and with the assurance that the capital of the state would not have been polluted by the foot of a parricide. But so far from that, he despatched Gen. Nelson to the "seaboard," and by so doing, put it out of his power to check the advance of Arnold, as otherwise he most certainly would have done. It is evident that had Mr. Jefferson executed the duties of his station properly, leaving to others the care of having the records and stores "*wagoned*" away, of hiding the arms from the enemy's shot, and sheltering the muskets from rain—had boldly taken the field with Gen. Nelson in front of the enemy, he would have saved Richmond from insult and pillage, ensured his re-election, and never have discovered that by embarrassing a military officer with civil duties, his power of acting in the face of the enemy would be invigorated.

There is yet another reason furnished by his writings for believing that his relinquishment of the Governorship, was the effect not of his being oppressed by the labours of office, but of the State being disgusted at his failure to perform his duties. He admits that a degree of public disapprobation was excited by his conduct as Governor, and that a member of the assembly, a man of honour and ability, (Mr. George Nicholas) brought specific charges against him before the House of Delegates. This took place in the session of June, 1781, and both the animadversions of the public and the intentions of the member must have been known to him when he communicated to Gen. Washington his determination to retire, that is, on the 28th of May, 1781. Now allowing for a moment that a consciousness of innocence is compatible with retirement under such circumstances—we find that after he became President, similar circumstances are assigned by him as causes compelling him to stand a second election. In a letter to Mazzei of the 18th of July, 1804, (Vol. IV. p. 21,) he says—"I should have retired at the end of the first four years, but that the immense load of *tory* calumnies which have been manufactured respecting me, and have filled the European market, have obliged me to appeal once more to my country for justification." The *calumnies* here called *tory*, a word which he uses as synonymous with *federal*, never went so far as a motion to Congress with "specific charges" for his impeachment. Yet though Mr. Jefferson had repeatedly declared his opinion that the President ought not to be re-eligible, we here find him provoked by vague newspaper attacks to stand a second election as President, while, when under a formal impeachment for

misconduct as Governor, he deemed it magnanimous to decline presenting himself for re-election, and to shrink prematurely into a private station.

It is curious to observe the confusion with which he attempts to navigate his story between the interlocking absurdities that obstruct its passage. In order to conceal the ignominy of having been compelled by public indignation to retire at a season of danger and glory from the helm of affairs, he affirms that he withdrew voluntarily and from a sense of fatigue. And then for fear of being overwhelmed by the contempt which such an inglorious retreat would naturally excite, he declares that he retired because he had not been "prepared by his line of life and education for the command of armies." But this justification if good for any thing in June, 1781, was certainly better in December, 1780, when Arnold first entered Virginia, inasmuch as during this interval, Mr. Jefferson gained the only military experience that ever crossed "his line of life." In acquiring it, it must be confessed he had shown himself to be more of a Xenophon than an Agesilaus, and had taken effectual care that his retreat should not be destructive to his countrymen; for he would not expose a single one of them to the peril of attending him, although he asserts positively that he himself was so rash, while nothing but a river broader than the Rhine interposed, to "lodge," (not to *sleep*, for he was too good a soldier to sleep on his post,) frequently within "four, five or six miles" of the enemy's pickets!

If, instead of excusing himself on the score of military ignorance and inexperience, Mr. Jefferson had said that he withdrew from office in June, because he discovered that he was too young; his plea would have been to the full as rational and praiseworthy —for the obvious objection to it would have been that he was six months younger in December, 1780, when he first heard of Arnold's approach, and two years younger in 1779, when he accepted the office of Governor.

But this resolution, he assures Gen. Washington, had been "long declared." He also affirms that it proceeded from his want of military experience and education. Now if this resolution had been long entertained, the consciousness of this defect of experience and education which prompted it, had long been felt, and was as capable of producing the effect ascribed to it, at first, as it was afterwards. If this be denied, then it must be admitted that between the time this consciousness of incapacity first arose in Mr. Jefferson's mind, and the day of his resignation, circumstances had taken place which convinced him that he was not qualified for the government of the state, and ought to withdraw. These circumstances must have occurred in the intervening campaign, and if they were of a character so impressive as to convince him of his own incapacity, they could not have escaped the vigilant notice of the public, and must have satisfied the people of his unfitness.

So that even on this view of the matter, he could not have been elected, had he desired it, and the public indignation which condemned him to retirement, and which he represents as far as he admits its existence, (Vol. IV. p. 42,) as senseless and unfair, was justified by the whispers of his own conscience, and the convictions of his own judgment. The conclusion, therefore, from his statement of his case is unavoidable, either that he was inexcusable for retreating from the public service, that is, was not conscious of incapacity; or that the charges brought against him by Mr. Nicholas were justified by his conduct—an alternative of equal delinquency and disgrace.

But in his letter to Gen. Washington he assigns as among the causes of his premature descent from power, a sense of official fatigue, the oppressive labours of office. This is inconsistent with his account of the transaction in his reply to Mr. Turner. Therein, no allusion to fatigue or oppression is made, but his defective education, his unwillingness "to stand in the way of talents better fitted than his own" for the station, and his conviction that in time of war the military and civil power should be lodged in the same hands, are assigned as the sole and exclusive reasons for his retreat. But waiving the irreconcileable properties of these two explanations, it may be observed that as to the sense of fatigue and experience of oppression, these could not have overcome him until about the time he retired. Neither the fatigue nor its effects were of a nature to be foreseen and calculated. Yet he affirms that the resolution he executed in June was the same he had declared his intention of executing long before—that is, long before one of the causes to which he ascribes it had come into existence.

As to his inferiority to Gen. Nelson that was either an equal and constant quantity during the whole period of his campaign, or it was not. If it was an equal and constant quantity, it was as much a reason in December as in June. If it was not, either Gen. Nelson had risen higher above him by some shining exploit, or he had sunk lower beneath Gen. Nelson in consequence of some positive evidence of demerit. Gen. Nelson being sent off by him to the coast, lost the opportunity of saving Richmond, and between that occasion and his election as Governor, performed no signal service. He therefore did not rise higher by any shining exploit, and of course, if this inferiority was a motive for Mr. Jefferson's retirement, it must have been attended by some positive evidence of his own demerit.

As to the last ingredient in this clumsy compound of excuses, the evident propriety of uniting civil and military power in the same hands whenever a State is invaded, besides its general fallacy, and its inconsistency with Mr. Jefferson's political doctrines, its absurdity with regard to his particular case is easily demonstrated. In the first place, by the constitution of Virginia, the Governor of the Commonwealth was, *ex-officio*, commander-in-

chief of the military forces of the State. So that there was the same desirable "union of the civil and military powers" in Governor Jefferson that there was to be in his successor Governor Nelson. His retirement could not produce the least alteration in the character of his office, or in the legal attributes of the Executive. In the next place, the folly of supposing that by having to attend to the civil branch of Executive duties the Governor is better able to execute the military branch, is too obvious to be insisted on. But it is particularly striking when we consider the organization of the Executive in Virginia. By the Constitution as it then stood, the Governor could not adopt any official measure without the advice of a board of Counsellors to whom he had the right of submitting propositions. But he could not even vote in their deliberations unless in the rare case of an equal division, when he was empowered to give a casting vote. With this machinery it is evident, that if the Governor in time of war chose to take command of the army and meet the enemy in the field, he must *pro hac vice*, have separated himself from his civil duties, and have given them up to the Lieutenant Governor and Council, recommending such measures from the camp as he thought advisable, in the same manner that a commanding general would have done. This was the case when Gen. Lee marched, as Governor of Virginia, against the Western Insurgents. The civil duties of his office were, during the whole time of his absence, performed by Lieutenant Governor Wood. There can be no doubt that the civil duties unless abdicated, would have been a drawback on the military energies of Governor Nelson or any other Goyernor; and in fact could not be performed by him while he was acting as a General in the field.

But if the Chief Magistrate of Virginia, in 1781, when that State was invaded, and himself chased from his capital, was in duty bound to resign his office in favour of a militia General, who, like Nelson, was animated by spirit and patriotism, Mr. Madison, in 1814, ought to have resigned his office of President in favour of Gen. Jackson. For President Madison was chased from his capital, and like Governor Jefferson was unprepared "by his line of life and education for the command of armies." Governor Tompkins should also have resigned in favour of Gen. Brown or Gen. Porter, who were both distinguished military officers of his own State. And in all future wars, as soon as an invasion takes place, both the Chief Magistrate of the State in which it happens, and the Chief Magistrate of the Union at the time, if they have not been "prepared by their line of life and education for the command of armies," must feel oppressed by the labours of office even after having served but two years, and resign their authority "into abler hands."

Preposterous and deceptive as the whole of this vindication of Mr. Jefferson is, no part of it is more glaringly so than the indispensable value he sets on a military education. Gen. Warren was

educated for the practice of medicine, and was actually a physician, though he had just received the commission of General, when he fell gloriously in the first of his fields. Gen. Greene was brought up a Quaker, and was educated a blacksmith, and was both Quaker and blacksmith when he marched at the head of a brigade to join the army, in the lines before Boston. Gen. Jackson was educated originally for the church, subsequently for the bar, and was a Judge before he was a General. The lives of these glorious men were as valuable to them and to their friends and families, as Mr. Jefferson's could fairly be; but how nobly did they offer them in their country's defence.

The regular army of the United States consists but of 6000 men, officers included; yet, according to Mr. Jefferson's justification of himself, if a war and invasion were now to happen, with a population of thirteen millions, and a confederacy of twenty-four sovereign States, all the Governors and the President, should in sound policy, be taken from this inconsiderable corps.

But even in his inglorious seclusion, on the woody top of Monticello, Mr. Jefferson was not safe from pursuit and exposure—

“—————Nec quicquam thalamo graves  
Hastas, et calami spicula Gnossii  
Vitabis, strepitumque, et celerem sequi  
Ajacem:”——

He had hardly nestled himself at home, when Cornwallis, eagerly endeavouring to bring La Fayette to action, reached Louisa Court-House; and learning there that the Governor and the Legislature had retreated to Charlottesville, despatched Tarleton with a party of his swift dragoons to carry them off. They fortunately got timely notice of his approach, and though unprepared and un-educated for fighting, made their escape, in the most skilful manner; the Legislature flying beyond the Blue Ridge, while Mr. Jefferson, from his own account, doubled round Carter's mountain.\*

About the time of this dispersal of our tribe of statesmen, it is probable Mr. Nicholas had laid before the House of Delegates the charges on which he proposed the impeachment. These charges, Mr. Jefferson tells us, were afterwards, through the mediation of a mutual friend, communicated to him, by their author, to whom he returned the heads of the answers he intended to make to them—that eventually Mr. Nicholas not only relinquished further proceedings against him, but took a public occasion to withdraw the

\* Mr. Jefferson sent off his family, to secure them from danger, and was himself still at Monticello, making arrangements for his own departure, when Lieutenant Hudson arrived there at half speed, and informed him, the enemy were then ascending the hill of Monticello. He departed immediately, and knowing that he would be pursued if he took the high-road, he plunged into the woods of the adjoining mountain; where being at once safe, he proceeded to overtake his family. This is the famous adventure of Carter's mountain.” (Vol. IV. p. 42.)

imputations contained in his charges, and that the General Assembly "pronounced an honourable sentence of entire approbation of his conduct, and so much the more honourable, as themselves had been witnesses to it." There is just as much truth in this story as is sufficient to cover a multitude of fictions, and being put forth in self-defence, would be liable to deduction on the score of self-interest, even if it were better made up. One material fact at least is misrepresented, and the circumstances of most importance to truth, are carefully omitted. The members of the General Assembly were *not* witnesses of his conduct in the Arnold campaign. For he himself tells us, (Vol. IV. p. 39,) that Arnold disembarked at Westover, at 2, P. M. on the 4th of January, entered Richmond at 1, P. M. on the 5th, and about the same hour on the 7th, got back to Westover. He also states, that the Legislature rose on the 2nd, and that the members bore his orders to the militia of their respective counties; nor does he intimate that any of these gentlemen were spectators of his rapid manœuvres on the right, or safe side of James river. Besides this distortion of a matter of fact, he makes no allusion to the events which took place between his flight in *June*, and his "*acquittal*" in January.

The cause of the transaction was evidently this; the charges for his impeachment were laid before the assembly at their June session. They related to circumstances in Mr. Jefferson's official conduct between the time of Arnold's disembarkation at Westover, the 4th of January, 1781, and the election of Governor Nelson on the 12th of June, in the same year. Before they could be acted on, Tarleton, in hot pursuit was heard. The General Assembly itself, the impeacher and the impeached, were involved in one undistinguished flight; which had the natural effect of producing a community of interest if not a fellowship of feeling between the prosecutor, the delinquent, and the judges. Soon after this, Governor Nelson took the field in person, at the head of the militia, and co-operated gallantly with the combined army against Cornwallis. The great and fortunate events, the siege and surrender of York followed, and in the winter afterwards, when the ease of security, the joy of triumph, and the prospect of peace, had succeeded to the sense of danger and the din of war, Mr. Nicholas—who felt the influence of these events, was satisfied at seeing the reins of government transferred from trembling to firm hands, and had been mollified not only by the confession of guilt and the appeal to lenity, implied in Mr. Jefferson's prompt retreat before his accusation, but by the blandishments of a mutual friend—consented to withdraw his charges.

The General Assembly, in the same temper of amnesty, and indulgent from their association in the Charlottesville scamper, seeing that Mr. Jefferson stood not only unconvicted, but unaccused, patched up his disgrace, as well as that of the State, by passing a resolution, bearing testimony to his patriotism, zeal, and fidelity,

generally, as well as I remember the report of it, in Gerardin's History, but avoiding any allusion to the charges, or to his military exploits as Commander-in-Chief, upon which particularly they were intended to bear. And this is what he calls "*acquitting him by an honourable sentence of entire approbation.*"

Is it possible to believe that a man, who, in the high station of Commander-in-Chief of the forces of a State, engaged in a war for liberty and life, was conscious of having performed his duty, and of possessing a claim to "honourable approbation," would have accepted such an *acquittal*, or to secure it would have condescended to carry on a sort of underplot negotiation with a co-ordinate officer, on whose public responsibility had been exhibited against him, charges of shameful misconduct, with a proposition of impeachment?

As Governor of Virginia, Mr. Jefferson was not only the first civil magistrate, but the highest military officer of the State. Do the annals of our own country or those of Europe furnish examples to justify him, either as magistrate or General, in thus accepting mercy and oblivion instead of insisting on investigation and justice? In the war of the Revolution, Gen. Schuyler (whom Mr. Jefferson includes (Vol. IV. p. 470,) in his charge of monarchism) finding that Congress was dissatisfied with his services, as Commander-in-Chief of the Northern department, and had evinced a persuasion that they might be placed in "abler hands"—though sensible of this injustice, forbore to sanction it by a premature resignation, but in the winter of 1777, waited on Congress, and demanded in person an inquiry into his conduct. "At his request, a committee, consisting of a member from each State, was appointed to inquire into his conduct, from the time he had held a command in the army."\* Of this inquiry, the effect was, that Congress "deemed it essential to the public interests, to prevail on him to retain his commission."† Though superseded afterwards in the most mortifying manner, by the appointment of Gen. Gates, this generous patriot withdrew neither from official rank nor personal danger, while unjustly suspended from command; he was present at the battle and surrender of Saratoga, and witnessing without envy the victory of his successor, by his generosity to the vanquished, made the virtues of humanity outshine the triumph of arms.‡

Judge Chase, when "specific charges" were preferred against him by the creatures of Mr. Jefferson, did not enter into a negotiation with Mr. Randolph or Mr. Early for their withdrawal. He did not transmit "the heads of his justification" to either of his accusers "through a mutual friend," but waited their attack before the

\* Marshall, Vol. III. p. 230.

† Marshall, Vol. III. p. 231.

‡ For an interesting account of Gen. Schuyler's hospitality and attention to Gen. Burgoyne, who had wantonly burnt his house, and devastated his farms, see the Memoirs of the Baroness Reidsel, and Thatcher's Journal, (p. 134.)

Senate of the United States, and completely defeated their prosecution. Warren Hastings—who, as civil and military Governor of the English East India possessions, was impeached before the House of Lords—is not related to have tampered with the zeal of Mr. Burke by a confidential exhibition of his “heads of justification,” nor did Lord Melville employ the offices of “a mutual friend” in order to avert the prosecution of Mr. Whitbread.

Mr. Jefferson, who had conferred upon his State the peculiar distinction of having a Governor who first fled from his capital at the approach of the enemy, and next retired from his station at the threat of an impeachment, furnished also the singular example of a person thus situated being kind enough to spare his fellow-citizens the expense of a public trial, by a clandestine correspondence with his prosecutor.

Can any one conceive that Gen. Washington, Gen. Jackson, Gen. Hamilton, or Gen. Lee, would have engaged in such grovelling diplomacy? If any one of them had been placed in the station of Mr. Jefferson, and had been guilty of half his pusillanimity, there is little doubt he would have been hung, and as little that his punishment would have been just. Yet Mr. Jefferson was so confident, from long success, of being able to impose on the credulity of his countrymen, that he determined to turn his escape from punishment into a title to glory; in the spirit of ancient Pistol,

“—— From my weary limbs  
Honour is cudgelled;”  
“—— Patches will I get unto these scars,  
And swear I got them in the Gallic wars.”

With respect to the assertion that “Mr. George Nicholas took a conspicuous occasion afterwards, of his own free will and when the matter was entirely at rest, to retract publicly the erroneous opinions he had been led into on that occasion, and to make just reparation by a candid acknowledgment of them”—it is to be remarked, that as Mr. Jefferson neither mentions the time nor the terms of this acknowledgment, nor the nature of the circumstances attending it—he conceals entirely the sole fact of importance in this question; that is, its value. If it was made immediately after what he calls his “acquittal” by the General Assembly, it was the offspring of the same fellowship and forgiveness which had dictated that ambiguous “sentence of entire approbation.” If it was made long after that act of grace was passed in Mr. Jefferson’s favour, it was doubtless connected with some manœuvre of the party of which he had become the acknowledged chief, and Mr. Nicholas a leading member.

On this last hypothesis which is rendered probable by the words, “afterwards, when the matter was entirely at rest,” it must have been procured or intended to fortify the very *acquittal* in the redeeming efficacy of which Mr. Jefferson exults. But admitting the fact of this acknowledgment, and allowing that it was made at

the most *propitious season* imaginable for Mr. Jefferson's credit, it cannot alter or destroy the great facts of his undefended capital, his hare-like retreat before Arnold, his distance from danger, his bashful demeanour towards his country's foes, and his virtual resignation under charges of impeachment. Though faith may remove mountains, neither "candour" nor "free will" can abolish facts like these.

To close this, the most characteristic scene in the drama of Mr. Jefferson's life:—There was a Mr. Gerardin, a French emigrant, engaged in Virginia as instructor of youth. He was, as I have heard, a man of amiable disposition and cultivated mind, studious and retired, and of remarkable simplicity of character. At one time he took up his residence in the neighbourhood of Monticello, and undertook to complete a very imperfect history of Virginia. As his task embraced the period of Mr. Jefferson's government, the latter kindly supplied him with a full set of materials, the chief of which were of course the journal and justification that have been just exposed. The effect of this liberality answered Mr. Jefferson's expectations. Mr. Gerardin, transformed from a wandering pedagogue into a modern Polybius, totally unacquainted with the body of our traditions, and relying devoutly on the interested statements of Mr. Jefferson himself, whom he looked up to as a great statesman, a great philosopher, a member of the French Academy, the friend of Volney and other *savans*, and the patron of all French theories and theorists, received his memoranda as Sybilline leaves, and all his hints as oracular responses. Of course he performed the part of a polygraph or *press-copy*, represented Mr. Jefferson as a pillar of state, as bearing on "Atlantean shoulders" the entire commonwealth during his governorship; and as overloaded only by the weight of praise contained in the equivocal resolution of the General Assembly.

The book, though feeble and of limited circulation, was received for gospel in Virginia, as the men who could contradict and disprove its statements, had long ceased to contend against the sway of Mr. Jefferson's name, and it stands now among the histories of the time, ready to forestall the opinions of posterity.\*

In casting up the account then of the first period of Mr. Jefferson's public life, and striking a balance between the credit to which he is entitled, and the blame that he deserves, it appears from his own statement that unless we make his authorship of the uncor-

\* It is thus recommended to the world by Mr. Jefferson, (Vol. I. p. 41.) "Being now, as it were, identified with the commonwealth itself" (by his election as governor) "to write my own history during the two years of my administration, would be to write the public history of that portion of the revolution within this State. This has been done by others, and particularly by Mr. Gerardin, who wrote his continuation of Burke's history of Virginia, while at Milton, in this neighbourhood, had free access to all my papers while composing it, and has given as faithful an account as I could myself."

rected draft of the declaration of independence, (which had no effect either on the act of independence itself or the success of the Revolution) with his legislative labours in Virginia, a complete offset against the calamity and disgrace of his governorship; it appears, I say, that unless we can come to this absurd conclusion, a delinquency on the score of public service stands fairly made out against him. And it may therefore be confidently affirmed that even his most partial admirers will be satisfied to make his deserts and demerits countervail each other, and will gladly agree to pronounce him, when the surrender of York took place, neither amenable to censure, nor entitled to applause.\*

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## LETTER X.

GENERAL LEE, soon after the battle of Lexington, entered the army as Captain of Cavalry, at the age of nineteen. His father was preparing him by a course of education for the profession of the law, and he was just about embarking for England to pursue the study of it under the patronage of his relative, since known as Bishop Porteous, when the commencement of hostilities changed his destiny. Besides being present at other important actions, in the northern department, he was at the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, and Springfield; and soon became a favourite of Gen. Washington. In the difficult and critical operations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, from 1777 to 1780 inclusive, he was always placed near the enemy, entrusted with the command of the outposts, with the superintendence of spies, and with that kind of service, which required in an eminent degree, the possession of coolness, address, and enterprise. During the occupation of Philadelphia by the royal forces, his activity and success in straitening their communications, in cutting off their light parties and intercepting their supplies,† drew on him the par-

[\* Mr. Tucker admits (Vol. I. p. 149) "That the depredations of the enemy" (by which it was estimated that Virginia lost property, during the six months which preceded the surrender of Cornwallis, to the amount of three millions sterling,) "produced the ordinary effect of complaint against those who had charge of the public defence, and especially against the governor." And at page 150 he candidly enumerates the charges brought against that functionary, and prudently declines to make any other defence against them than that furnished by Mr. Jefferson himself, and referred to in the text.]

† Marshall, Vol. III. pp. 203, 325, and 27.

ticular attention of the enemy. And being attacked in consequence, his defence of the Spread Eagle Tavern, with only ten men, against Tarleton at the head of two hundred, which has been already alluded to, excited no little admiration.\* When the distress of the army for provisions reduced Gen. Washington to the necessity of foraging for supplies, as if he had occupied the country of an enemy, a measure which, as may be supposed, excited the most injurious discontent among the inhabitants, Lee, being employed on it, had the address to execute this painful but necessary duty, without exciting the smallest disaffection.† He co-operated as far as cavalry could act, in Gen. Wayne's attack on Stony Point, and procured the intelligence on which it was projected.‡ Indeed, from a part of his correspondence with Gen. Washington which has been preserved, it seems not improbable that Major Lee suggested that brilliant enterprise. In a letter to the Commander-in-Chief, of the 21st of June, 1778, he observes,—

Sir,—Since my last, no movement has taken place among the enemy encamped on this side the river. Two very intelligent deserters this morning from Stony Point, mention that yesterday a body of troops (number unknown) embarked from the east side of the river between the hours of twelve and two. They confirm the information contained in my last, concerning the 63d and 64th

\* Marshall, Vol. III. p. 377. "As Captain Lee was extremely active, and always in the neighbourhood of the enemy, a plan was formed late in January, to surprise and capture both him and his troop in their quarters. A very extensive circuit was made by a large body of cavalry, and four of his patrols were seized without communicating the alarm. About break of day, the enemy appeared, and the few men of the troop who were in the house with their captain were immediately posted at the doors and windows. Though his party was so small as not to furnish one to each window, they behaved so gallantly as to drive off the assailants without losing a horse or more than one person. Their quarter-master-sergeant, who was out of the house when the attack commenced, after being almost cut to pieces, was taken prisoner. The whole number in the house did not exceed ten. That of the enemy was said to amount to two hundred. They lost a sergeant and three men, with several horses killed; and an officer and three men wounded. On the part of Captain Lee, except his patrols and quarter-master-sergeant who were captured out of the house, only Lieutenant Lindsay and one private were wounded. The event of this skirmish gave great pleasure to the Commander-in-Chief. Throughout the late campaign, Lee had been eminently useful to him, and had given proofs of talents as a partisan, from which he had formed sanguine expectations for the future. He mentioned this affair in his orders with strong marks of approbation, and in a private letter to the Captain, testified the satisfaction he felt at the honourable escape that officer had made from a stratagem which had so seriously threatened him. For his merit through the preceding campaign, Congress promoted him to the rank of Major, and gave him an independent partisan corps to consist of two troops of horse, and by a subsequent resolution, another troop was added to this corps."

† Marshall, Vol. III. p. 372. "Captain Lee found large droves in the marsh meadows on the Delaware preparing for Philadelphia, which he had the address to procure, without giving to the body of the people any additional irritation."

‡ Marshall, Vol. IV. p. 73.

regiments being about to move from Stony Point. They also say, that two days since, the sick and the aged soldiers, the women with children, and the baggage belonging to both officers and soldiers were put on board for New York. The following is not a very accurate state of their naval force at King's-Ferry:—

One 50 Gun Ship—the Rainbow.

Armed Sloops and Schooners.

Floating Batteries.

Gunboats.

Bomb Ketches.

Row Gallies.

Transports and Victuallers.

} Numbers not ascertained.

Their chief work on Stony Point is a triangular fort, on the summit of the eminence, exceedingly strong, and doubly abattied. On every spot in their camp which admits of it, they have erected batteries. They talk also of opening a canal and forming draw-bridges. They have in their several works, 7 twenty-fours, 2 medium twelves, 2 long twelves, and 2 threes, all brass. They also have one howitzer and two mortars, and 6 iron sixes not mounted. Gen. Clinton is not yet returned from New York—Gen. Vaughan commands in chief—Col. Johnston of the 17th, commands at Stony Point. It is reported in their camp that Lord Cornwallis has arrived at the Hook with a reinforcement, under convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot. They do not credit the news from the Southward. I begin to apprehend that Gen. Clinton has designs upon the East river. He certainly means to draw off all the troops but a sufficient garrison to possess the ferry. This he keeps to distress us in the conveyance of support to our troops, should your excellency follow him to the eastward as expected. Your excellency will pardon me for the intrusion of my opinion. It proceeds only from a desire to exhibit every probable object that may engage the enemy's attention. Many deserters get in from your excellency's army. The manner of sending scouts by detail from divisions, affords them good opportunity. A detachment seldom comes down without losing several of its men before they return. There can be no object in the reach of these parties adequate to their certain loss. Good intelligence cannot be obtained by flying parties. The enemy continue so close within their lines that there can be no hopes of meeting with marauders, and protecting the people from their depredations. Picquets of armies stationary and under cover of works cannot be easily carried. Officers in command anxious to perform some service, are apt to engage in improbable attempts. Accidents happen and soldiers are lost without venture of service. I lay these observations before your excellency because they originate from what I see and know.

I am, &c. &c.

H. LEE, JR.

In the course of this severe campaign when desertions from the American army became so frequent as to threaten its dissolution, Major Lee was authorized by Gen. Washington to inflict summary punishment on such deserters as he should take *flagrante delicto*. Being in command of the outposts and always close to the enemy, these offenders often fell into his hands. He commenced accordingly by hanging one of a party, and to strike a wholesome terror into the main army sent the lopped and bleeding head to Gen. Washington's camp. This last proceeding was not altogether approved by the Commander-in-Chief, though, contrary to his apprehensions, it is known to have produced a most salutary effect. In relation to it he wrote to Major Lee the following note—

“*Head Quarters, New Windsor, 10th July, 1779.*

“Sir,—I have this moment received your letter of the 9th. I wish mine of the same date had got to hand before the transaction you mention had taken place. I fear it will have a bad effect both in the army and in the country. I would by no means have you to carry into execution your plan of diversifying the punishment, or in any way to exceed the spirit of my instructions yesterday. And even the measure I have authorized ought to be practised with great caution. I am, Sir, &c. &c.

“GEO. WASHINGTON.”

P. S. You will send and have the body buried lest it fall into the enemy's hands.

MAJOR H. LEE,  
L. D.

The orders he received and the reports he transmitted during the campaigns of 1779 and 80, were daily, and show that Gen. Washington relied on him peculiarly for intelligence respecting the enemy's force and movements. It appears, in short, that at this early period he had so completely engaged the confidence of that great Commander, that in an official letter of the 7th of October, 1779, he was directed in future to mark his communications with the word *private*, so that they should not be examined even by the officers of the General's military family.

When compassion for the impending fate of Major André induced Gen. Washington in the hope of averting it, to make extraordinary exertions to capture Arnold, he consulted Lee—who planned the scheme, and selected the agent for that purpose, which are both so graphically described in his Memoirs.\* He projected and executed the surprise of Powles Hook, a service for which the thanks of Congress with an emblematical medal of gold were voted

\* See the letters of Gen. Washington on this subject published in Lee's Memoirs.

him; a distinction which no other officer below the rank of Gen. received during the war.

These services of Gen. Lee, which with various others are not mentioned in his memoirs, are here epitomized or alluded to, for the purpose of balancing the careful and ostentatious catalogue which Mr. Jefferson draws up of his own revolutionary performances. They gained for him a reputation for talent and patriotism, which induced Congress in November, 1780, to promote him to a Lieutenant Colonelcy of dragoons, and to augment his corps by adding to it three companies of infantry, the officers and men composing which, he was authorized by Gen. Washington to select from the whole army.

With this chosen corps, he was soon detached to join the army of Gen. Greene in the south, where great exertions were required to recover the ground lost by Gates's defeat at Camden. On this occasion, his patriotism exalted by the misfortunes of his country, he expended in the purchase of horses for his dragoons, and in equipping his corps, a considerable part of the small fortune given him by his father, a contribution for which, though it proved of essential advantage to his country, he never received, nor even asked remuneration.

The same public disaster seemed to affect Governor Jefferson's patriotism in a very different manner, for on the 15th of September, 1780, (Vol. I. p. 181,) we find him addressing the following careful epistle to Gen. Stevens, at a time when the attention of that gallant officer was doubtless altogether engrossed by his public cares. "Among the wagons impressed for the use of your militia were two of mine. One of these I know is safe, having been on its way from hence to Hillsborough at the time of the late engagement, the other, I have reason to believe, was on the field. A wagon master, who says he was near it, informs me, the brigade quarter-master cut out one of my best horses and made his escape on him, and that he saw my wagoner loosening his own horse to come off, but the enemy's horse were then coming up, and he knows nothing further. He was a negro man, named Phill, lame in one arm and leg. If you will do me the favour to inquire what is become of him, what horses are saved, and to send them to me I shall be much obliged to you. The horses were not public property, as they were only impressed and not sold. Perhaps your certificate of what is lost may be necessary for me. The wagon master told me that the public money was in my wagon, a circumstance, which may, perhaps, aid your inquiries." So that the Governor, in this season of general calamity, did not forget number one, and so far from being actuated by a feeling so unphilosophical as humanity for "lame Phill," was of opinion that a *certificate* of his loss, would be a good substitute for the *Nigger*. As to the loss the country sustained of public money which fell into

the hands of the enemy, he only mentions it as "a circumstance" which might lead to the recovery of his own property.

About the time Governor Jefferson was completing his memorable warfare against Arnold, Lieutenant Col. Lee joined the army of Gen. Greene. Under the orders of that able Commander his exertions are well known to have been indefatigable, and his services various and important. He assisted conspicuously in the battles of Guilford and Eutaw, at the sieges of Ninety-six, Augusta, Fort Watson and Fort Motte. He reduced Fort Granby, surprised Georgetown, dispersed and cut to pieces the tories of North Carolina, and projected and undertook the bold and well-concerted enterprise against St. John's Island, which failed in the execution, from an error not attributable to him. In the course of Greene's operations he was always in the rear when the army retreated, in the van when it advanced, and nearest to the enemy when it was stationary—and so active were his operations, when detached, that in the space of six weeks, besides the loss he inflicted on the enemy in killed and wounded, he took from them prisoners amounting to four times the number of his own corps. "The continued labours and exertions of all were highly meritorious, but the successful activity of one corps will attract particular attention. The legion, from its structure, was peculiarly adapted to the partisan war of the southern States, and by being detached against the weaker posts of the enemy had opportunities for displaying with advantage all the energies it possessed. In that extensive sweep which it made from the Santee to Augusta, which employed from the 15th of April to the 5th of June, this corps, acting in conjunction, first with Marion, afterwards with Pickens, and sometimes alone, had constituted the principal force which carried five British posts, and made upwards of eleven hundred prisoners."\*

But above all these services in dignity and effect, was "the bold and happy resolution"† with which he inspired the mind of Greene, to return from Deep River into South Carolina, leaving Lord Cornwallis to penetrate into Virginia. The effect of this movement in rescuing from subjugation the three southern States, in confining Lord Cornwallis to Virginia, and bringing about the great catastrophe at York, which closed the military operations of the revolution, need not be here explained. At the time it was suggested, the two Carolinas and Georgia were in the condition of British provinces, and Gen. Greene's camp was the limit of American sovereignty within them. It is true that the stubborn patriotism and indomitable courage of Sumter, Marion, Pickens, and Clarke, still survived this general prostration, and it is also true that Governor Rutledge still hovered over his loved state with the wings of a dove and the spirit of an eagle. But without the vivifying presence of Greene and his army, these men of fortitude and

\* Marshall, Vol. IV. p. 536.

† Ibid. Vol. IV. p. 384.

virtue, could only have prolonged the agony of their country's overthrow.

It may be added, that after the battle of Eutaw, military operations having been suspended by the excessive heat of the south for a few weeks, Lieut. Col. Lee repaired to the head-quarters of Gen. Washington, on a mission of importance from Gen. Greene, and was present at the siege and surrender of York; where, though he found that his native State had called all her sons to the field to assist in this final struggle, Mr. Jefferson, who had solemnly pledged "his life, his fortune, and his sacred honour," in the contest, was not to be seen.

This part of Gen. Lee's history may be closed by observing that when upon the termination of the last campaign in Carolina, he retired from the army of Gen. Greene on furlough—the only one he obtained during the war—that great officer who knew the value of men, and had been aided by the services of such men as Morgan, Wayne, Williams, Washington the younger, Howard, Laurens, Campbell, Sumter, Marion, and Pickens, used the following language in a letter to the president of Congress, Feb. 18, 1782. "Lieut. Col. Lee retires for a time for the recovery of his health. I am more indebted to this officer than any other, for the advantages gained over the enemy in the operations of the last campaign, and should be wanting in gratitude not to acknowledge the importance of his services, a detail of which is his best panegyric."\*

\* Gordon, London ed. Vol. IV. p. 254 et seq.

[I may be excused for inserting the following letter, and extracts from letters, from the great Washington, written in the midst of those services which they reward with his precious approbation.

"TO MAJOR HENRY LEE.

"*Head-Quarters, near Springfield, 11 June, 1780.*

"Dear Sir—I have received your favour of this date. The spirit which has been exhibited by your corps gives me pleasure, and, be assured, meets with my thanks and approbation. As your rapid progress must have fatigued the cavalry in some degree, I wish you for the present to take post somewhere in our rear. Perhaps Chatham, or its vicinity, is as well calculated to afford you forage as any other place. You will, however, when you have fixed on the spot, be pleased by a line to point it out to me. I shall be glad to see you at my quarters to-morrow morning. I am," &c.

The rapid progress of the cavalry alluded to in the foregoing letter, arose from their anxiety to share in the operations which resulted in the battle of Springfield, where, both in resistance and pursuit of the enemy, they exhibited their accustomed gallantry. These little gems in the revolutionary correspondence of Washington have an inexpressible charm,—placing one among the scenes of our heroic age, as distinctly as Homer's poems do upon the plains of Troy.

"And thought my steeds, your large supplies unknown,  
Might fail of forage in the straitened town."

The following extract is from a letter of Washington to the President of Congress, of October 11th, 1780.

"Major Lee has rendered such distinguished services, possesses so many

So far, then, up to the close of the revolution, it appears from the evidence of general history, that the sum of services rendered by Gen. Lee to his country, although his rank was inconsiderable, and his authority limited, was positively great, and unreduced by a single act of delinquency. Besides executing the duties attached to the several stations he occupied, with an efficiency which secured the confidence of his commanders, and the distinguished approbation of Congress, he had by the unassisted exertions of his own mind, risen far above their subordinate sphere, and by fertility of thought, as well as enterprise in arms, had been the principal instrument in restoring three important States to the Union. While Mr. Jefferson, who declared that Gen. Lee "had been too much trusted by his country," when clothed with the dignity and power of the most populous and warlike member of the confederacy, yielded without an attempt at defence, or a momentary exposure of his person, her capital, her arms, her archives, and her honour, to a conscience-stricken traitor, and a predatory band of deserters.

This was the state of Mr. Jefferson's and Gen. Lee's comparative merit, as public servants, at the time when peace and independence, in consequence of such spirit as the latter had exhibited, and in spite of the pusillanimity betrayed by the former, crowned the arms and efforts of the United States.

talents for commanding a corps of this nature, and deserves so much credit for the perfection in which he has kept his corps, as well as for the handsome exploits he has performed, that it would be a loss to the service, and a discouragement to merit, to reduce him, and I do not see how he can be introduced into one of the regiments in a manner satisfactory to himself," &c. The next is an extract from a letter to John Matthews, a member of Congress from South Carolina, dated October 23d, 1780.

"Lee's corps will also go to the southward. I believe it will be found very useful. The corps itself is an excellent one, and the officer at the head of it has great resources of genius."]

## LETTER XI.

PROCEEDING to the second division of Mr. Jefferson's public life, and confiding in his own estimate of his services, it appears that in May, 1782, the blast of indignation to which he bent like a reed, having overblown, the Legislature of Virginia more sensible of his political talents than of his military demerits, appointed him again, one of their delegates to Congress. While a member of that body, he proposed, as an amendment to Morris's report on the currency, the decimal notation of money now in use. In 1784, he was commissioned by Congress to negotiate in conjunction with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, treaties of commerce with such of the governments of Europe as might be disposed to establish relations of the kind with the United States; and in the year following he succeeded Dr. Franklin, as minister to the court of France. In this situation, which was well suited to his mind, he displayed diligence and ability, which, however creditable to himself as a diplomatist, effected no important negotiation for his country.\*

In the autumn of 1790, he returned home, and in the spring following, as we have already seen, at the instance of Gen. Washington, took charge of the department of State. In this station also his abilities were conspicuous, and until he became the patron of those designing individuals and deluded multitudes who endeavoured to force the government of the United States into an alliance with France and a war with England, it may be said, they were

[\* The ability for which Mr. Jefferson is commended in the text, was evinced only in executing instructions. As an adviser upon subjects about which his avocation supposes peculiar information and profound knowledge, he was far from able. When Mr. Jay, then President of Congress, inquired of him, "Whether it would be useful to us to carry all our own productions or none?" "he evidently showed (says Mr. Tucker, Vol. I. p. 183,) a preference for the Chinese policy." He also thought the most effectual remedy for the evil of getting in debt to England, was to interdict our trade with her—and states to Mr. Pleasants, that he thinks "the trade with Great Britain as a ruinous one to ourselves!" (p. 216.) And Mr. Necker must have been surprised at his proposition "to draw supplies of salted provisions from America to France, suggesting in favour of the measure, that it was much cheaper than fresh meat, and that, by enabling the French people to turn a part of their lands from pasture to the growth of corn, it would make the supply of that article more abundant." (p. 298.)

The idea that our surplus beef and bacon could have been of an amount sufficient to effect sensibly the agriculture of the thirty millions of France, is perhaps the most extravagant idea that ever was broached—to say nothing of the disregard with which the proposition founded upon it treats those French palates, whose taste in cookery is so often commended in Mr. Tucker's work, and was so happily adopted in Mr. Jefferson's kitchen.]

laudably exerted.\* His career as the Chief of Gen. Washington's cabinet, was, however, not a successful one, since in his hands, notwithstanding the influence of Washington's fame and wisdom, our relations with France degenerated into insupportable arrogance on the part of her agents; with England, were left perfectly unsettled, both as to commerce and boundaries; and with Spain, in a course of injury and neglect on the part of that power, which was as unfavourable to the reputation as to the interest of our country.

From this situation, our foreign relations were not retrieved until after Mr. Jefferson's resignation; when the treaties with Great Britain, Spain and Algiers, the defeat of the Indians by Gen. Wayne, and the suppression of the western insurrection by Gen. Lee, the principal of which measures Mr. Jefferson reprobated, placed our external and domestic affairs on a new and satisfactory footing, and enabled Gen. Washington, at the opening of the session of Congress in 1795, to use the following language: "I trust I do not deceive myself while I indulge the persuasion that I have never yet met you at any period, when, more than at present, the situation of our public affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation; and for inviting you to join with me in profound gratitude to the Author of all good for the numerous and extraordinary blessings we enjoy." "This interesting summary of our affairs with regard to the powers between whom and the United States controversies have subsisted; and with regard also to our Indian neighbours, with whom we have been in a state of enmity or misunderstanding, opens a wide field for consoling and gratifying reflections."†

[\* But how reprehensible his conduct then was cannot be known without a profounder consideration of the French faction, which then perplexed the counsels of this country, than there is room for here. The Memoirs of La Fayette, lately published, throw some light on this subject. In his fourth volume he says, (See National Gazette, December 1, 1838,) that "Genet was sent to the United States by the Girondists, expressly charged with the task of disorganizing our country and exasperating its parties. He quotes, as an antithesis to Genet's spirit and conduct, the answer of *La Luzerne* in 1778, when urged to endeavour to create then in America, the distinction of French and English party. 'I might not scruple to employ in Germany the ordinary expedients of diplomacy; but I should feel culpable of using them among these honest Americans, and a people quite new.'"

The terms upon which Mr. Jefferson stood with this missionary of disorganization may be seen in a letter of the former to Mr. Madison—(Tucker's Life, p. 444,) "He (Genet) renders my position (that of Secretary of State,) immensely difficult. He does me justice personally; and giving him time to vent himself, and become more cool, I am on a footing to advise him freely, and he respects it; but he will break out again," &c. The picture which Mr. Jefferson draws of himself, bowing before that petulant Jacobin until he vented himself, is as little enviable for its dignity, as it is consistent with propriety for a Secretary of State to be the confidential adviser of an envoy to his government; and the whole is sufficient proof of the truth of what Genet asserted, after he quarrelled with his friend, viz: that Mr. Jefferson had two languages, one for the public and another for him.]

\* Marshall, Vol. V. pp. 642-3.

Mr. Jefferson resigned in December, 1793, flying, as it would seem, from the temptations of power to the pure embraces of solitude and philosophy—where, instead of contributing to the improvement of his country or the instruction of mankind, he appears, from his “Writings,” which have been so ostentatiously published, to have cultivated exclusively the sciences of deception and slander.

In December, 1794, accordingly, the fruit of his studies began to appear in the letter to Mr. Madison, with which commences that course of insidious detraction against Gen. Washington, which has been already traced out to you, that sowed the seeds of civil discord and foreign war, disturbed the peace and obscured the glory of the father of our country, was more ungrateful than unjust, and more relentless even than malignant.

In 1797, Mr. Jefferson became Vice President of the United States—a station in which, it appears from his “Writings,” he was altogether employed in vilifying with terms of hate and falsehood, the great men among his fellow-citizens who happened to differ with him in opinion on public matters—such as Hamilton, Jay, and Marshall—and in furthering his own views on the presidency by deluding his political friends, such as Madison, Burr, and Monroe, by false alarms, false professions, and false statements.\* In 1801, his schemes were consummated, and he was elected President of the United States. This exalted station, as you know, he occupied eight years—during which time the acts that distinguished

[\* Among the abusive writers whom Mr. Jefferson made the objects of his charity during this period, was the notorious Callender. Of him Mr. Tucker says, (Vol. II. p. 119,) “having attracted attention by the coarse vigour of his style, Mr. Jefferson, among others of his party, learning of Callender’s indigence, made him donations of small sums of money from time to time. *Thus encouraged*, he had redoubled his efforts during the hottest of the conflict, and had even brought out a volume or two in which he assailed the members of the administration and federal party, personally and politically, with all his powers of argument and vituperation. He often wrote with great force; but his charges were in such a style of exaggeration, and expressed a strain of ribaldry and vulgarity so unusual, that he was likely to injure the cause he espoused yet more than to serve it.”]

When, however, this unhappy man taught Mr. Jefferson the truth of that saying of Macbeth—

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“we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which being taught return  
To plague the inventor—”

he denied that those donations of his, which his biographer distinctly asserts, encouraged Callender to redouble his scurrilous efforts, had any thing to do with them, and says, in his letter to Mr. Monroe, (Vol. III. p. 494,) that they were merely charities, which he “was in the habit of giving to others in distress, of the federal as well as the republican party.” This discrepancy between the account of this affair by Mr. Jefferson and his biographer might be settled by the publication of Mr. Jefferson’s letter to Gen. S. T. Mason, while Callender was at his house, authorizing him to draw for fifty dollars for Callender; and by the whole of Mr. Jefferson’s correspondence with Callender.]

him as a statesman were, the purchase of Louisiana, the perpetual embargo, and the gun-boat system.

The first was a measure of such capital advantage to the United States, that it is even yet impossible to conceive the full extent of its utility. A century may revolve without completing the development of great and benignant consequences which the acquisition of that vast territory with its deep fertility, its lofty forests, its mineral wealth, its rich savannahs, its matchless rivers, its natural outlets to either ocean, is destined to produce. When we consider the rapid flow of population which is covering it with the best rudiments of social and political life, it seems as if we beheld the work of enchantment, rather than the effect of policy; as if a magic wand had waved over that wide and luxuriant region, and was rearing upon its surface a city of empires. Whoever conceived the measure, whether it originated in an overture from the French Government or in a proposition from ours—or whether, as seems probable from Mr. Jefferson's "Writings" (Vol. III. pp. 493, 501 and 4,) it was a project completed by degrees—rising from an attempt to purchase the lower country on the east bank of the Mississippi, with a view of securing to the United States the free navigation of that river, to the more splendid and important conception of annexing to the domain of the nation that fertile and extensive territory, the credit of the acquisition is solely due to Mr. Jefferson. He embraced the design with ardour, prosecuted it with zeal, and justified it with confidence.

It must be confessed, however, that in the light in which he regarded its consequences, the acquisition of Louisiana, would not have proved what it now is, and I trust always will be, an inestimable advantage to the United States. Mr. Jefferson considered it as not unlikely to produce a separation of the Union, as the probable forerunner of two confederacies, one to be composed of the western, and the other of the Atlantic States, (Vol. IV. p. 14.) "Whether we remain in one confederacy, or form into Atlantic and Mississippi confederacies, I believe not very important to the happiness of either part." Had this been its probable consequence, the purchase of Louisiana would not have been an act of wisdom on the part of the government of the United States. For it would have been neither more nor less than a contribution on the part of the Atlantic States of fifteen millions of dollars, for the purpose of detaching from their own possession all the western territory which they then held on both banks of the Ohio, for reducing their remaining limited confederacy to insignificance, and exposing it in Mr. Jefferson's opinion to endless hostility.\*

But as this was not the probable consequence of the measure, as

\* Vol. III. p. 505. "Whatever power other than ourselves, holds the country east of the Mississippi, becomes our natural enemy," (p. 512.) "We have seldom seen neighbourhood produce affection among nations, the reverse is almost the universal truth."

the greatest of all its advantages was its strong and direct tendency to perpetuate the Union, by comprehending within its dominion all the interests of each of its members, Mr. Jefferson, while he supposed he was entailing what would have been eventual ruin on his country, was actually endowing it with magnific sources of wealth, freedom, happiness, and power.

It may be doubted likewise, whether in his conduct of the negotiation, the prudence of a statesman was displayed. It was to be a purchase—and the pivot on which the transaction was poised, was the want of money on the part of the French government, (Vol. III. p. 502.) “As to the time of your going, you cannot too much hasten it, as the moment in France is critical. St. Domingo delays their taking possession of Louisiana, and they are in the last distress for money for current purposes.” Robert R. Livingston, a man of high character and talents, according to Mr. Jefferson’s own confession, (Vol. III. p. 443,) was our resident minister in France, and was already engaged in the negotiation, (Vol. III. p. 493,) when Mr. Jefferson thought fit to despatch Mr. Monroe, as a special envoy for the purpose of facilitating the purchase. As Mr. Livingston was every way qualified for his station, and was known at the time to be actually engaged in the negotiation, this extraordinary mission of Mr. Monroe could have had but one effect on Mr. Livingston—that of disgusting him with his office and his employer. Its tendency in other directions, must have been equally pernicious. By betraying over-anxiety in our government to make the purchase, its natural effect was to raise the price demanded by France, or at least to defeat any attempt of Mr. Livingston to lower those demands. These consequences of the mission, if it had been so timed as to produce any effect at all on the transaction, were from the nature of things, inevitable, and unless it be possible to conceive that such a man as Mr. Monroe could, by personal address and diplomatic eloquence, overpower the genius of Napoleon and defeat the dexterity of Talleyrand; they were unattended by the slightest hope of advantage to any citizen of the United States but Mr. Monroe himself. He had been instrumental in Mr. Jefferson’s election, and was somehow or other to be provided for. Now as Mr. Jefferson, the President, and Mr. Madison, the Secretary of State, were both citizens of Virginia, it was not possible to confer an appointment of sufficient dignity and emolument at home, on Mr. Monroe, who was also a citizen of that state. He was therefore accommodated with this special mission to France, which, as Mr. Livingston had settled the terms of the purchase before his arrival, was, though perfectly useless, fortunately not mischievous.\*

\* The fact of Mr. Monroe’s perfect uselessness on this occasion has been very conclusively explained by Gen. Armstrong, the successor of Mr. Livingston, in an obituary of that gentleman. See Gardner’s United States Magazine.

[A letter at page 187, Vol. III., of Sparks’s Life of Gouverneur Morris, rather

Having assisted in the important work of *signing* the treaty of purchase, Mr. Monroe was despatched from France to Spain on another mission of pretended importance, but of no utility, and was thence transferred to the situation of minister to the Court of Great Britain, where he terminated his diplomatic career under Mr. Jefferson, as he had begun it under Gen. Washington, by departing from the spirit of his instructions, and by signing a treaty so little acceptable to his government, that his friend and patron President Jefferson, would not even submit it for consideration to the Senate.

If there be an absurdity of American statesmanship, extravagant and ruinous enough to counterbalance the fortunate policy which compassed the acquisition of Louisiana, it is to be found in Mr. Jefferson's famous embargo. It is impossible for the most fantastical theorist to conceive any combination of political ideas more puerile and visionary, than those which entered into this project. It was intended to humble Great Britain if not to annihilate her, by withholding our exports of flour and grain, and was persisted in after it was proved that the whole of our exports of flour for a year, would not supply one week's consumption for the city of London!

With this suicide of our prosperous navigation and growing commerce, a measure which to the last Mr. Jefferson extolled as the master-stroke of his political judgment, which was the object of contempt and ridicule abroad, and of misery and disgust at home, may be associated as a kindred, though a lesser folly, the annihilation of our navy, and the substitution of a flotilla of gun-boats. As the perpetual embargo was declared to be intended for the protection of our navigation and commerce, (Vol. IV. p. 148,) so was this destruction of our infant navy affirmed to be the estab-

excites than satisfies curiosity on the subject of the respective merit of Robert R. Livingston and Mr. Jefferson in the purchase of Louisiana. The following extracts may provoke the reader to seek it in that interesting work.

"I like well your treaty, and have declared to my friends, some of whom are not pleased with the declaration, that it is in my opinion one of the best we have made, not only for the main business, but also for the formal and incidental matter." \* , \* , \* , \* , \*

"To tell you an important truth, my friend, you have saved that administration, who, in return, will never forgive you for performing, without orders and without powers, such great public service. Your conduct is a satire on theirs, for you have gained what they did not dare to ask. Had the bargain been disagreeable to those states by whom the President expects to be re-chosen at the next election, you might have been disavowed, but it secures the western states, quiets the southern, and is consequently popular."

\* , \* , \* , \* , \* , "If I am rightly informed, offence is taken. Vanity has certainly been wounded, because confidants must know the facts, and vanity is the leading trait of a certain character. You will learn from your friends here, how they stand at head-quarters, and whether your services have strengthened their interest."]

lishment of our maritime strength and the means of securing us the enjoyment of peace, (Vol. III. p. 409, *et passim.*)

On the credit side of this account, Mr. Jefferson and his idolators have insisted that he has a right to charge the abolition of weekly levées, as introducing a simplicity in the carriage of the Executive congenial with the spirit of a republic. But both he and they should have recollected that inasmuch as Mr. Jefferson was not a personage eagerly sought after, and studiously gazed at like Gen. Washington, if he had continued the weekly levées, instead of reducing those "forms of government," to three occasions yearly, his preparations for visitors, his *sitting up for company*, would have been "calling spirits from the vasty deep."

Connected with this pretension and equally frivolous, is his claim to republican modesty and plain dealing in opening the sessions of Congress by a written message, instead of a speech. As I have already intimated, the difference of these two modes of proceeding, if worth estimating, is certainly in favour of the frank and respectful custom of Gen. Washington. Every government has its proper and characteristic habits. Those of pomp and splendour belong to a monarchy, those of simplicity and fairness are suited to a republic. Into these Gen. Washington, filled with genuine republican virtue, promptly and easily entered. He met the co-ordinate branches of government face to face, saluted them with dignity and addressed them with candour. Knowing that he had been elevated to the Chief Magistracy of his country by honest means, he was not ashamed to exhibit the simple dignity of his office.\* Mr. Jefferson, besides being extremely ungraceful in his personal carriage, was conscious of having risen to power by unworthy and clandestine courses, by inconsistencies, misrepresentations, evasions, and calumnies, and must naturally have preferred addressing the representatives of the nation from the recesses of his cabinet, to the open encounter of their gaze and scrutiny in the delivery of official orations. Under the influence of this feeling he would probably have left the rostrum, with that bashful grace and retrospective caution, with which a Virginia attorney first alights from his new Philadelphia coach; or in other words, as a bear descends a tree.

This spurious modesty had, no doubt, an influence in the retrenchment of the levées, which Mr. Jefferson announces to Mr. Macon, (Vol. III. p. 470,) as among the great measures of political reformation, by which his reign was to be distinguished. He could not but feel the disadvantage of placing his tall, but unmajestic figure, his uneasy manners and studied affability, in weekly con-

[\* —————— "In himself was all his state,  
More solemn than the tedious pomp which waits  
On princes, when their rich retinue long  
Of horses led and grooms besmeared with gold  
Dazzles the crown."]

trust with what men remembered and adored, of the warlike form, the noble deportment, and generous modesty of Washington, in avowed opposition to whose example and principles he had come into office.

His pretensions to the credit of economical reform in the expenses of the government, though confidently urged, are not well founded. His claim on this head consisted mainly in disbanding the provisional army of President Adams, in reducing the navy, and in abolishing the offices created by the law imposing direct taxes. But the increase of the army and of the navy, as well as the direct taxes, were the just and necessary consequences of the situation in which our commerce and character were placed by the outrages of the French Directory. When Mr. Jefferson came into power not only had that atrocious oligarchy ceased to exist, but our differences with France had been terminated by a treaty signed the 30th of September, 1800, and the laws providing for the increase of the military means of the country had all been in consequence repealed. Notwithstanding these public and recorded facts, Mr. Jefferson solemnly claimed (Vol. IV. p. 434,) not only credit but reward for this reduction of taxation and patronage, as if they had really been measures of relief for which the country stood indebted to his judgment and patriotism.

So complete and bewildering was the fanaticism, with which he succeeded in afflicting the intelligence of his country, that the Assembly of Virginia, in their address upon his retirement from the office of President, return him thanks for the favour *he* conferred on the nation by these measures, (Vol. IV. p. 438,) and to this farcical blunder of that *deliberative* body, he referred in applying to their successors for privilege to sell his estate by lottery. The Assembly of Virginia at the same time thank him for exploding "the monarchic maxim that a national debt is a national blessing," and for paying off in the eight years of his government thirty-three millions of our debt.

As to the first part of this double benefaction, it would be worth while to estimate it, if the maxim had ever been adopted by the government of the United States. When the system of finance suggested by Hamilton was under discussion in Congress, one of the objections to it, was, as I have already observed, that it would create an enormous and unextinguishable debt. To this it was answered that the debt already existed, and that the adoption of Hamilton's plan, would not involve the creation of a new debt but would be paying an old one—and that the certificates of this debt which the government would be required to issue to the public creditors would become a circulating medium, and *pro tanto* would supply our want of a metallic currency. Then, to parry this persuasive argument, the adversaries of the measure, charged its supporters with acting on the corrupt doctrine that a public debt is a public blessing. To this unjust reproach and shallow sophistry,

Mr. Jefferson gave countenance and circulation, and by so doing it would appear, acquired, in the opinion of the Virginia Assembly, a title to the gratitude and applause of his country!

But the members of that "deep divan," were so intent on thanksgiving, that they did not perceive the hideous incompatibility existing between their two themes of adoration. If the debts due by the nation, had not, in opposition to the opinions of Mr. Jefferson, been honestly assumed and effectively funded at the instance of Hamilton and his friends, who thereby exposed themselves to the discredit of this "monarchic maxim," Mr. Jefferson never could have had the glory of paying off the thirty-three millions. And this too, as it was, they should have recollect ed, he was chiefly enabled to do by the salutary effects of Jay's treaty, a measure, which the lauded President, and the laudatory Assemblymen, incessantly decried.

In regard to his reduction of the diplomatic establishment of the United States in Europe to three ministers, which is vauntingly proclaimed to Mr. Macon—it is true that the mission to Berlin, which the elder Adams had instituted for the benefit of his son, was abolished by the administration of Mr. Jefferson. But to balance this instance of economy, he doubled our principal embassies in Europe, successively—first by associating Mr. Monroe with Mr. Livingston in France, then with Mr. Pinckney in Spain, and last by inflicting similar annoyance on Mr. Monroe himself, at London, in the person of Mr. William Pinckney, as stated by Mr. Jefferson in a letter to Mr. Monroe, (Vol. IV. p. 106.) "You consider the mission of Mr. Pinckney as an associate, to have been in some way injurious to you." In addition he nominated Mr. Short on a special mission to attend the imperial interview at Erfurth, in 1808, a piece of meddlesome extravagance which was beyond the endurance even of a subservient Senate.

This complex diplomatic machinery was productive of no advantage to the foreign relations of the United States, which were left by Mr. Jefferson, as every body knows, in a most inflamed and precarious condition.

But if the merit of the Louisiana purchase be admitted to overbalance not only President Jefferson's minor faults, but the fatal empiricism which dictated the gunboat system and the indefinite embargo—this destroying our commerce and revenue,—that strangling the herculean infancy of our navy; the invention of the nullifying doctrine to which he asserts an incontestable claim, (Vol. IV. p. 344,) throws in a weight of demerit that must turn the scales against his pretensions. When it is considered that the same mind gave birth to these prodigious chimeras—that the monstrous doctrine of nullification and the horrible policy of the embargo, could not co-exist without inevitable destruction to the Union, the country will feel disposed to be thankful for having escaped the mischief

of Mr. Jefferson's contrivances, rather than for having enjoyed the benefit of his services.

If Gen. Jackson were to persuade the States of our confederacy to adopt as orthodox the nullifying theory, and then were to induce Congress to lay an indefinite embargo, there can be no doubt he would break up the Union in less than sixteen months. As little doubt can there be that he would at once cancel all the claims which his great and substantial services have established to the gratitude of his country, and that he would prove himself about as sincere a friend to the constitution as Guy Faux was to the English parliament. Yet Mr. Jefferson, who, instead of overthrowing in well-fought fields the invaders of his native soil, retired from danger faster than it approached, and slunk from office at the very time when "the post of honour was a *public* station," endeavoured to persuade the States to adopt and practise this nullifying doctrine, and induced Congress to lay an indefinite embargo.

In order to countervail his admitted errors, and to enhance his supposed virtues as a statesman, the admirers of Mr. Jefferson have been in the habit of extolling his pretensions to a name in literature and a place in the galaxy of science.

As a scholar it is but too obvious from his writings that his merits were of the humblest description. His diction is any thing but refined. Redundant of words and foul with gallicisms, neologisms and vulgarisms, it is neither arrayed in the splendour of classical wealth, nor inspired by the natural and wanton spirit of English ease and vigour. His misquotation from the second Georgic,

"*Flumina amo sylvasque inglorius,*"\*

is pregnant proof that he had never comprehended the meaning, felt the spirit, nor enjoyed the harmony of that exquisite passage; and that he was acquainted neither with the character which Virgil has left of himself nor with the beauty of his versification.

If with this anti-classical evidence be coupled his assertion (Vol. IV. p. 331,) that the French is "the most copious and eloquent language in the living world"—a case of complete gothicism will be made out against this pseudo lover of letters. A Frenchman might be pardoned for preferring his own language to ours, as a kitten may be supposed to prefer cat's milk to any other. But for a man whose infant tongue lisped the language of Shakspeare and Milton and Barrow and Burke—a privilege which the compatriots of Homer and Demosthenes might have envied; to declare the French the most copious and eloquent of living languages, argues

[\* Professor Tucker passes this misquotation without notice, though he extracts the passage containing it. Nor do I remember a single passage in all Mr. Jefferson's writings which evinces that he truly entertained that affection which he misquotes Virgil to claim for himself; and will venture to assert that he never felt so kindly towards a river or a wood, as when the former shielded him from Arnold, and the latter hid him from Tarleton.]

a hopeless degree of insensibility to the most powerful and agitating forms of human eloquence. On this point it is enough to look at Delille's translation of *Paradise Lost*.

In regard to his pretensions on the score of science, it is remarkable that notwithstanding his avowed predilection and even "predestination" for philosophical studies, (Vol. IV. p. 126,) he contributed nothing to the stock of human knowledge, though he flourished in a most inquisitive and luminous age, and lived in leisure and retirement at least twenty years.

His *Notes on Virginia*, a puerile and imperfect work, was considered promising for a beginner in philosophical speculation; but except as a slender repository of traditional facts, is now neither valued nor known by men of science. There is among his letters one, (written while he was our Minister in France,) addressed to M. Le Roy, of the French Academy of Sciences, (Vol. II. p. 57,) in which an account of the easterly breezes prevailing during a part of the summer in lower Virginia is given, and a very formal solution of the phenomenon is attempted. In the statement of the problem it is evident that Mr. Jefferson "welcomes fancies for facts," in order to make room for his reasoning, which, though intended, no doubt, to recommend him as a member of the academy,\* is as trite and inconclusive as any patchwork of philosophical *charlatanerie* that ever was before or since contrived. He confounds the progress of settlement and observation with the range of the easterly breezes—seeing in the fact of their prevalence being noticed farther and farther from the seacoast, the phantasm, that they extended farther and farther into the interior country, induced by the sparse and limited openings made in the primeval forests by our early settlers. This is his language. "The information given by me to the Marquis de Chastellux, was that the sea breezes which prevail in the lower parts of Virginia, during the summer months, and in the warm parts of the day, had made a sensible progress into the interior country; that formerly and within the memory of persons living, they extended little above Williamsburg, that afterwards they became sensible as high as Richmond, and that at present they penetrate sometimes as far as the first mountains, which are above a hundred miles farther from the sea-coast than Williamsburg is." Now this, instead of being philosophy, is nothing but the more vulgar than common error of putting the cart before the horse. Instead of the breezes following the population from the seacoast first to Williamsburg, then to Richmond, and then to "the first mountains," the population followed the breezes and found them prevailing with various degrees of steadiness and force, at these successive distances from the ocean.

\* He did not succeed in this object until the 26th of December, 1801, when he was elected a member of the French Academy of inscriptions and belles-lettres. From the date of this distinction, "I see this useful deduction" that it was conferred, not on the philosopher but on the President.

The breeze which refreshed the hardy woodsman had waved the high branches of the oak which he felled to the ground.

But Mr. Jefferson undertakes to show from the effect of heat on the temperature of the earth's surface and the air resting on it, as compared with its effects on the ocean and its superincumbent air,—that the summer sea breezes which prevail in lower Virginia, had, before the country was settled by our ancestors, visited only the sea coast, and had since gradually extended into the interior of the country, in consequence of the increased cultivation and exposure to the sun of the earth's surface. How any man could adopt this hypothesis, as early as 1786, you will doubtless think a problem much more difficult of solution than the extensive prevalence of these sea breezes, when you recollect that even now at least three-fourths of the surface of lower Virginia, though interspersedly settled, is covered with forests. Forty-five years ago the proportion of cleared land must have been much smaller; and even if we could admit Mr. Jefferson's ratiocination as to the action of the sun's rays on the surface of the ocean, on the earth when cleared, and when covered with forests, it would be impossible to conceive that the sparse and inconsiderable settlements which existed between Richmond and "the first mountains" in the year 1786, could have had any sensible effect on the force or direction of the winds.

Mr. Jefferson seems not to have considered, that if, according to his theory, this new impulse and extensive range were given to the sea breeze, a corresponding increase of force and extension must have occurred in the land breeze, and would have been observed by mariners along our coast. No such thing, however, is believed to have happened, or is pretended by him to have taken place. You have no doubt observed that this easterly breeze prevailing from about the last of June until the middle of August in Virginia, by day, is always succeeded at night by a gentle air from the south-west. This, which is known to be the effect of the altered state of comparative temperature in the surfaces of the earth and of the ocean, the operation of the same causes, being reversed, would, in restoring the equilibrium of the atmosphere, be increased in force, and extent of prevalence exactly in proportion to the augmented intensity of the sea breeze; as the lengthened vibration of a pendulum on one side of the perpendicular, extends the range of its motion on the other.

Throughout his dissertation he appears to treat light and heat as identical; but to compensate for this error, he discovers that the heaviest air resides in the higher regions of the atmosphere! "These mountains constitute the highest lands in the United States; the air on them must consequently be *very cold and heavy*, and have a tendency to flow both to the east and west." (P. 60.) Without insisting on the old Newtonian notion of gravity, it may be considered strange that with this tendency to move, the heavy air should remain stationary, particularly as it is never found in ele-

vated situations by travellers, who in climbing up high mountains invariably complain of the irrespirable lightness of the atmosphere on their summits. Such tangled philosophical gossamer as this, it must be confessed, was likely to confer any thing but glory on a nation which had produced, and had just been represented in Paris by, FRANKLIN.

If we follow our philosopher from the physical to the moral world, we shall find that as his speculations on matter are fantastical, so his creed as to mind is material, and that his doctrines are as ridiculous as his practice was deterring. His ungenerous conduct towards Hamilton, his deceit and ingratitude towards Gen. Washington, confessed to Mr. Madison, in explaining the letter to Mazzei, have been already touched upon. The duplicity of his professions to Col. Burr, his ferocious persecution of that individual —his repeated and deliberate inconsistencies as to matters of fact, will recur to your memory without being recapitulated, and cannot fail to convince you that in respect of the practice of virtue and the cultivation of science, his claims to admiration were equally factitious.

His ethical doctrines which are found chiefly in his correspondence with Mr. Adams, Mr. Short, and Dr. Rush, in the fourth volume of his "Writings," are surprisingly inept and presumptuous. To Mr. Adams he exclaims, (p. 272,) "I have often wondered for what good end the *sensations* of grief could be intended. All our other passions within proper bounds have an useful object." And he adds—"I wish the pathologists then would tell us what is the use of grief in the economy, and of what good it is the cause, proximate or remote." Now whatever *pathologists* might say, *moralists* would readily have explained to Mr. Jefferson the chastening power of grief over the other passions. How it rebukes avarice, mitigates anger, disarms envy, moderates ambition, and sanctifies love. How it raises the mind from earthly to heavenly things; from subjects of temporary interest, to objects of eternal hope.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

In truth, the *Swan of Avon* was a better philosopher than the *Sage of Monticello*.\*

He assures Mr. Short, (p. 321,) that St. Paul was an impostor, and (p. 325,) ridicules "the whimsies of Plato's foggy brain," because, as it would seem, the knowledge of the animal economy,

[\* In a letter to one of his daughters (I believe) Mr. Jay says—"It is not pleasant to be in affliction nor in the rain; and yet both are dispensed by the same benevolent hand; the one to produce medicine for spiritual maladies; the other to produce supplies for animal life. Many have said and many will say with David, who was no stranger to distress—"in very *faithfulness* hast thou afflicted me."]

possessed by that ancient philosopher, was inferior to that displayed near two thousand years after his time, by Mrs. Bryan, in her "Conversations on Chemistry."\* It is not worth while to refer you

[\* Yet the admirers of Jeremy Bentham confess that Plato anticipated him in the use of that *exhaustive method* of reasoning which they so much extol; and Lord Bacon, the first person in Mr. Jefferson's trinity, recognises in the writings of that immortal philosopher his own *inductive* or *analytical* system. (See a late number of the Westminster Review—and the article on *Bentham's Method*.)

In connexion with Mr. Jefferson's abuse of such persons as Plato and St. Paul, it is illustrative of his character to recollect the sort to which he tendered honour and respect. To one of these he writes, soon after his installation as President—"it is with heartfelt satisfaction that, in the first moments of my public action, I can hail you with welcome to our land, tender to you the homage of its respect and esteem," &c. &c. And to the notorious Tom Paine he tendered a passage to America in a public vessel, and tells him in his letter of invitation—"I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily laboured, and with as much effect as any man living. That *you may long live to continue your useful labours*, and to reap their reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer."

M. de Tocqueville remarks, (*Democracy in America*, p. 287,) "The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and of liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive the one without the other; and with them this conviction does not spring from that barren traditionalist faith which seems to vegetate in the soul rather than to live."

This has been regarded as a high compliment to American democracy, and the more so, as coming from one who is certainly not its friend. Yet among the first uses which Mr. Jefferson, who has been called the apostle of liberty and the father of our navy, (fictions equally gross,) made of his presidential authority, was to desecrate a public ship to the service of Tom Paine, the notorious reviler of Christianity and of him whom Mr. Jefferson himself has praised as the father of the republic. This was considered at the time such an outrage upon the best faith and feelings of the country that Mr. Tucker thinks it calls for vindication, which he accordingly makes in his own peculiar way. He admits (Vol. II. p. 96,) that "When we consider, indeed, how many of the American people had been scandalized by Paine's *Age of Reason*, and scarcely in a less degree by his letter to Gen. Washington, mere prudence would have dictated a different course to Mr. Jefferson on this occasion; and had he been the calculating, interested being he has been depicted by his enemies, shaping all his words and acts to some fixed design, he would have evaded Paine's application." Yet just before, while defending this act of courtesy to Paine, from being construed into an approbation of his attacks on Christianity and Washington, this ingenious logician had said, that it was unfair to attribute it to "any other consideration than that of Paine's services in the revolution, and the support he was yet able to give to the republican cause (that is, Mr. Jefferson's party,) in America." That this was the true cause of his being brought over is obvious enough from Mr. Jefferson's own "sincere prayer," that he might long live to continue his "*useful labours*;" and the "calculating, interested being" who imported him, thought that scandalizing "many of the American people," was a cheap price to pay for a continuance of such services. And this supposition will lose every shade of doubt when we remember that the letters composing Paine's most recent and (to the "scandalized" Americans,) most obnoxious political pamphlet, had but lately passed through Mr. Jefferson's hands to the press, as appears from his very letter of invitation to Paine, which concluded with the burst of praise and gratitude above cited, and assurances of the "high esteem and affectionate attachment" of his exalted correspondent, while his heart was yet warmed with the first

to his puerile and shallow speculations in support of materialism; which, though he appears to have rummaged the Dictionary of Bayle manfully, are remarkable for nothing so much as a *want* of that learning, ingenuity, and speciousness, by which such sophisms are usually sought to be recommended. He holds, (Vol. IV. pp. 332, 333,) that the soul of man, and even that God himself is *matter or nothing*. That is,—to lose sight of feeling and revelation, and to wander with him into metaphysics,—that not only are sorrow and hope material affections, but that the first cause of all matter, is matter itself; or that creation had no creator, the universe of effects, no cause.

But returning from his jejune and vapid scepticisms to the estimate of his public character, it may be reasonably assumed, that his merits as a philosopher in letters, physics, ethics, or theology, are not of a description to ennoble his qualities, or canonize his defects, as a statesman. And we may firmly and safely rest on this conclusion, that when the people of the United States shall take an unimpassioned view of Mr. Jefferson's character as a public servant, making a liberal allowance of praise for the good of which he was the author, and extenuating as far as the most indulgent justice will allow, the impurity of his motives, the insincerity of his sentiments, the mischief of his opinions, and the errors of his conduct, they will be compelled to admit, that if the country stands indebted to him at all, on the general account, the balance in his favour is very small indeed.

glow of his fire-new honours. Nor is the elation they are apt to produce propitious to the exercise of "mere prudence," a virtue for which, Mr. Tucker well knows, Mr. Jefferson was by no means remarkable. Its introduction, therefore, is quite as gratuitous as his attack upon the federalists in the note on the preceding page, that "some of the federal families found some soothing to their mortification in having songs sung by their children" in ridicule of "Beau Dawson." How earnest must Mr. Tucker be to deprecate that party, when for the sake of this frivolous surmise, he thus commemorates the half-brother of Mr. Monroe, who was certainly as amiable in his deportment as "studious of his personal appearance!"]

## LETTER XII.

IN entering upon the second division of Gen. Lee's public life, it is natural to reflect on the opposite influence of the peace, as it modified his destiny, and affected the career of Mr. Jefferson. Had the war been persevered in but a little longer, there is ample reason to believe that in consequence of the conspicuous services of Gen. Lee, known to the army, felt by the nation, and testified by Gen. Greene in his letter to the President of Congress, he would soon have been promoted to the command of one of our principal armies, and would have stood forth in rank and position as he was in reality and effect, inferior only to Washington and Greene, in patriotic service and military glory.

On the other hand, it is fair to presume, that but for the return of peace, the pacific qualities which Mr. Jefferson had exhibited in the midst of war and invasion, could never have engaged the confidence of his country, or roused him from that bed of rest to which he protests he was driven, neither by the audacity of Arnold, nor the fame nor force of Cornwallis; nor by the fear of wounds or of death or of impeachment; but by a sudden diffidence in the merits of his early education, and the intolerable fatigue of two years of official life!

*“————— Captique dolis lachrymisque coacti,  
Quos neque Tydydes, nec Larissæus Achilles,  
Non anni domuère decem, non mille carinæ.”*

Peace, however, fortunately for the country, was the speedy consequence of those exertions which, more than compensating for the retirement of Governor Jefferson, rescued the three Southern States from British domination, and compelled Cornwallis to surrender at York. Military virtues being no longer demanded, and the arts of policy prevailing in public estimation over fame in arms, Mr. Jefferson recovered as suddenly from the oppression of diffidence and lassitude, as he had unexpectedly sunk under them, returned to public life, and as we have seen, by the clemency and connivance of the Virginia Legislature, as well as by the kindness and confidence of Gen. Washington, regained in process of time public favour.

To the effect of this state of things may be added, in accounting for the comparative inactivity of this part of Gen. Lee's career, the facts, that he appears to have had but slight ambition for any other than military employments, and that he was at an early period embraced in that popular disfavour, by which, in consequence

of Mr. Jefferson's machinations, all Gen. Washington's prominent supporters in Virginia were visited.

Soon after the close of the Revolution we find him, however, a member of the Virginia delegation in the Congress of the United States,\* in which situation he devoted himself to forwarding those measures that prepared the way for the adoption of the constitution. He was also among those of Gen. Washington's friends who most earnestly persuaded him to undertake the all-important duties of the first presidency;† and happening to be in the vicinity of Mount Vernon when Washington was about to fill for the first time the office of President, on the impulse of the moment he prepared the address which was presented to that illustrious man by his neighbours, and was so well adapted to the occasion as to be thought by Marshall worthy of being transferred to the pages of his history.‡ "The sentiments of veneration and affection which were felt by all classes of his fellow-citizens for their patriot chief, were manifested by the most flattering marks of heartfelt respect; and by addresses which evinced the unlimited confidence reposed in his virtues and talents. Although a place cannot be given to these addresses generally, yet that from the citizens of Alexandria derives such pretensions to particular notice from the recollection that it is to be considered as an effusion from the hearts of his neighbours and private friends, that its insertion may be pardoned. It is in the following words.

"Again your country commands your care. Obedient to its wishes, unmindful of your ease, we see you again relinquishing the bliss of retirement; and this too at a period of life, when nature itself seems to authorize a preference of repose!

"Not to extol your glory as a soldier; not to pour forth our gratitude for past services; not to acknowledge the justice of the unexampled honour which has been conferred upon you by the spontaneous and unanimous suffrages of three millions of freemen, in your election to the supreme magistracy; nor to admire the patriotism which directs your conduct, do your neighbours and friends now address you. Themes less splendid but more endearing impress our minds. The first and best of citizens must leave us: our aged must lose their ornament; our youth their model; our agriculture its improver; our commerce its friend; our infant academy its protector; our poor their benefactor; and the interior navigation of the Potomac (an event replete with the most extensive utility, already, by your unremitting exertions, brought into partial use,) its institutor and promoter.

"Farewell!—go! and make a grateful people happy, a people, who will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this recent sacrifice for their interest.

"To that Being who maketh and unmaketh at his will, we com-

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 136.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., Vol. V. pp. 155–6.

mend you; and after the accomplishment of the arduous business to which you are called, may he restore to us again, the best of men, and the most beloved fellow-citizen!" As a member of the Convention of Virginia which ratified the federal constitution, he was distinguished for zeal and eloquence in favour of that measure.\* As Governor of Virginia he served the full term of three years, and besides executing the ordinary duties of his office, commanded the army sent against the western insurgents; whose dangerous outrages, though countenanced by Mr. Jefferson, and nourished by the sympathy and assistance of at least one of his leading friends, Gen. Lee repressed completely and without bloodshed.

Subsequently to this, he was a member of the Virginia Assembly, and in the debates on the famous resolutions of Mr. Madison, took a leading and conspicuous part. Afterwards in compliance with the wishes of Gen. Washington, he became again a candidate for Congress, and though contending with the tide of opposition which was then setting against the federalists, carried his election. While a member of that Congress he prepared those resolutions on the death of Gen. Washington which seem destined to endless association with the fame of the hero they commemorate; and as the chosen organ of a nation's grief delivered a funeral oration before the two houses of Congress, which was admired for nervous brevity of language, and for deep and pathetic energy of feeling.

To the various other testimonies of respect and veneration by which the representatives of the people endeavoured to do honour to his departed friend, Gen. Lee most anxiously contributed, both in his public and in his private character, as may be seen by the following letters† addressed to him on behalf of Mrs. Washington, and written about the time Mr. Jefferson was congratulating himself and his friends on the disappearance of "the Washington popularity."

*"Mount Vernon, Jan. 16th, 1800.*

"Dear Sir—I had the honour, last evening, to receive your favour of the 8th inst. enclosing the oration, which was presented to Mrs. Washington. She requests me to assure you of the grateful sensi-

\* Robertson's Reports of the Debates in the Virginia Convention.

† In the report of the joint committee which was appointed by Congress, "to devise the mode by which the nation should express its feelings on this melancholy occasion," and whose report was adopted; it was resolved, "that the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, be desired to request one of the members of Congress to deliver a funeral oration." Mr. Jefferson was then Vice-President of the United States and President of the Senate. So that for paying this last and most solemn honour to the memory of Washington, he concurred in the choice of a man whom he had represented to Washington himself as every way vile and contemptible. This is sufficient to shew the insincerity of his sorrow for Gen. Washington's death, or of his abhorrence for Gen. Lee's character.

‡ In MS.

bility with which she receives this tribute of respectful and affectionate regard paid to the memory of her dear departed husband; and, at the same time, permit me to say, my dear sir, that the assurance you give, that, whenever it shall please heaven to take her from among us, her remains will be placed in the same tomb with his whom she held most dear, fulfils the first wish of her heart.

“With best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, &c.

“TOBIAS LEAR.

“GEN. LEE.”

“*Mount Vernon, April 23d, 1800.*

“Dear Sir—At the request of Mrs. Washington, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to her of the 10th instant, and to convey her best thanks for your friendly attention in communicating the unanimous assent of Congress for extending to her the right of franking. This evidence of personal attention, from the representatives of our nation, has impressed her mind with grateful sensibility.

“For the repeated assurances of your disposition to contribute by every means in your power, to her happiness or convenience, Mrs. Washington begs you to accept her sincere thanks, and at the same time to receive her prayers for your health and happiness, in which most cordially unites, dear sir,

“Your respectful and obedient servant,

“TOBIAS LEAR.

“GEN. LEE.”

You are probably not altogether unacquainted with the history of the business which these letters bring into view. One of the proceedings of Congress was to obtain the consent of Mrs. Washington to place the remains of her husband at the disposal of the government, but Mr. Jefferson and his friends gaining the ascendancy and coming into power, the obligation of honour which had thus been added to the debt of gratitude, was shamefully evaded, and left unfulfilled. The remains of Gen. Washington, as well as those of his amiable, beloved and affectionate wife, remain where they were first placed, in the turf-covered vault of Mount Vernon.

Among the resolutions UNANIMOUSLY adopted by both houses of Congress were the two following:—

“That a marble monument be erected by the United States at the City of Washington, and that the family of Gen. Washington be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it, and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life.”

“That the President of the United States be requested to direct a copy of these resolutions to be transmitted to Mrs. Washington, assuring her of the profound respect Congress will ever bear to her

person and character, of their condolence on the late affecting dispensation of Providence, and intreating her assent to the interment of the remains of Gen. Washington, in the manner expressed in the first resolution."

Marshall relates the abortion of these sorrowful and solemn proceedings in a passage which, as far as I know, has never been contradicted nor even commented on, by Mr. Jefferson or his friends.

"To the letter of the President, which transmitted to Mrs. Washington the resolutions of Congress, and of which his Secretary was the bearer, that lady answered, "taught by the great example which I have so long had before me, never to oppose my private wishes to the public will, I must consent to the request made by Congress, which you have had the goodness to transmit to me; and in doing this, I need not, I cannot say what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of public duty." The monument however has not been erected. That the great events of the political as well as military life of Gen. Washington, should be commemorated, could not be pleasing to those who had condemned, and continued to condemn the whole course of his administration. This resolution, therefore, though it passed unanimously, had many enemies. That party which had long constituted the opposition, and which, though the minority for the moment, nearly divided the House of Representatives, declared its preference for the equestrian statue which had been voted by Congress at the close of the war. This was taking Mr. Jefferson's hint, (Vol. III. pp. 373, to 377,) that respect might be manifested for the General, but by no means for the President. The division between a statue and a monument, was so nearly equal that the session passed away without an appropriation for either. The public feeling soon subsided, and those who possessed the ascendancy over the public sentiment, employed their influence to draw odium on the men who favoured a monument; to represent that measure as a part of a general system to waste the public money; and to impress the idea that the only proper monument to the memory of a meritorious citizen, was that which the people would erect in their affections.\*

Upon this subject it is painful to dwell. Let us hope that our country will yet recover from these delusions, and will perform with sincerity and good taste, a duty, the neglect of which is a continual shock to the noblest feelings of our nature, a stain upon the character of the nation, and an outrage on the general sentiments of mankind.†

\* Vol. V. pp. 771, 772.

[† I am happy to record here an act of a private individual, which to the limited extent of his power, has relieved the nakedness of the national neglect on this subject. Thus we often see some humble plant spreading its fair leaves and sweet blossoms over the desolation made by the grand convulsions of nature.

Those who have the care of Washington's remains have lately placed

The summary I have given you, of Gen. Lee's political life, as far as it goes, furnishes evidence of virtue, ability, and patriotism, unalloyed by selfish, or sinister designs. The abatements to which they may be thought obnoxious, are those simply of honest error of opinion, without the slightest taint of corruption. I allude to his support of the alien and sedition laws, in the Virginia assembly, and to his vote for Burr, instead of Jefferson, as President.

As it cannot be denied, that a nation, when engaged in hostilities or preparing for war, has a right to expel from its territory, alien enemies, it must be admitted that the only charge against Gen. Lee on this head, arises out of the alleged unconstitutionality of the particular law in question. This principle was enforced, and to the satisfaction of a large portion of the public, established by the ingenious logic of Mr. Madison's famous report. But Gen. Lee was one among many, whom it failed to convince.

With regard to the sedition law, inasmuch as it expressly secured to persons arraigned under its provisions, the right of justifying themselves by proving the truth of their allegations, there was neither tyranny nor injustice in its spirit. Its remote consequences, tending to restrain the liberty of the press, rendered it inexpedient in point of policy; and Mr. Madison demonstrated by a chain of fine and admirable reasoning, that it involved the exercise of a power which was not fairly deducible from the Constitution. Gen. Lee took a different view of the subject, and supported it, I have understood, in a strain of captivating eloquence, by clear and forcible arguments. His opinions, though rejected by a majority of the assembly to which they were submitted, and since discountenanced by a majority of the people, had the concurrence of the Congress of the United States, of the federal judiciary, and of the Legislatures of several of the States. It should also be taken into

them in a beautiful marble sarcophagus. The maker of it, Mr. John Struthers of Philadelphia, has raised himself from the occupation of a mechanic to the station of an artist. Yet this meritorious citizen, though of that division of the working classes, which Mr. Jefferson considers (see Tucker, Vol. I. p. 184,) "the panders of vice, and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned"—yes, he of this abused "class of artificers," entreated so earnestly, that this favourite work of his hands might be received as a free offering of his gratitude to the memory of the father of his country, that he overcame the sincere desire of the executors to reward him for it. They must have felt, too, that the feelings of this excellent man were an appropriate consecration of the marble, which was to hold those remains, which are consecrated by like affections in the hearts of his countrymen. I am told that it is admirable as a work of art; but were it worthy the chisel of Canova, that would be but dust in the balance when weighing the merit of its maker. Who does not envy him the emotions of those silent hours in which he was shaping that marble, whose fair proportions, as they rose under his hand, animated his pious hopes that they might be deemed worthy to enclose the noblest remains of mortality?

A sarcophagus of equal beauty and by the same noble artist encloses the remains of Mrs. Washington.]

consideration, that in consequence of the excesses to which the Democratic Societies, and other partisans of France, had carried their proceedings, and the formidable example of their effect in exciting the Western insurrection, the Government was placed under a sort of necessity of guarding strictly against similar atrocities at the time these laws were passed: when, owing to the enmity and insolence of the French Directory, and the strength of the French party in the United States, a defensive war with France was looked upon as certain, and a want of concert at home in maintaining it, was apprehended.

With respect to Gen. Lee's voting for Burr, there are several grounds of extenuation, if not of complete justification. At that time the responsibility of the Representative to his constituency was not so generally admitted, or so strictly enforced, as it is at present. The theory of Burke, so eloquently propounded to his Bristol electors, was the text of our most enlightened politicians, and was thought particularly applicable to the question then before the House of Representatives. To this consideration is to be added, the moral repugnance which Gen. Lee's knowledge of Mr. Jefferson's practices must have created. Could he as a good citizen, or a faithful representative, assist in placing at the head of the nation, an individual whom he firmly believed to be untrue in his private, and unprincipled in his public character? However this question may be answered, it can impugn neither the personal nor the political honour of Gen. Lee.\*

[\* The alien and sedition laws have been generally regarded as the highest among the crimes of the federal rule. From one end of the Union to the other those acts have swelled the longest and the harshest howl of party objuration. But at length it appears, if we may trust the biographer of Mr. Jefferson, (him, to whom the whole magazine of weapons for party purposes, which the long life and remarkable diligence of the sage of Monticello collected,) if we may trust him, thus armed, and backed by the learning and library of the University, the poor alien law has been most unjustly belaboured all this while; or, at least, "was condemned by most Americans, like the stork in the fable, for the society in which it was found, and for the sake of soothing the great mass of foreigners, who were not yet naturalized, the greater part of whom, particularly the Irish and French, were attached to the republican party." (Vol. II. p. 46.)

But ought not those who acknowledge a blindness of such grossness and long continuance, to distrust somewhat their newly restored vision, and, at any rate, to confess that the federalists fell into no greater error in not recognising the crane, than their opponents did in mistaking the stork. The friends of truth, however, may congratulate themselves that half the error upon this subject seems in a fair way of being entirely exploded, and I cite the following illustrious authorities in favour of both those laws, not to control opinion in regard to them, but to conduce to its impartial formation.

Mr. Spotswood, a relation, I think, of Gen. Washington, had enclosed him a publication, which the writer said had thoroughly convinced him of the unconstitutionality of the alien and sedition laws. From the General's reply I extract the following paragraph:

"But I will take the liberty of advising such as are not "thoroughly convinced," and whose minds are yet open to conviction, to read the pieces and

Upon the whole comparison therefore, between Mr. Jefferson and Gen. Lee as public servants, upon a scale of what may be termed

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hear the arguments, which have been advanced in favour of, as well as those against, the constitutionality and expediency of those laws, before they decide; and consider to what lengths a certain description of men in our country have already driven, and seem resolved to drive matters, and then ask themselves if it is not time, and expedient, to resort to protecting laws against aliens (for citizens you certainly know are not affected by that law,) who acknowledge no allegiance to this country, and in many instances are sent among us, as there is the best circumstantial evidence to prove, for the express purpose of poisoning the minds of our people, and sowing dissensions among them, in order to alienate their affections from the government of their choice, thereby endeavouring to dissolve the Union, and of course the fair and happy prospects which were unfolding to our view from the revolution." Writings of Washington, Vol. XI. p. 345.

At page 386 of the same volume, there is a letter from the same high source to the late Judge Washington, informing him that he had sent to Gen. Marshall "the charge of Judge Addison on the liberty of speech and the press, and in justification of the sedition and alien laws," and requested the General after he had read it to give it to Mr. Washington, &c. The letter continues:

"But I do not believe, that any thing contained in it, in Evans's pamphlet, or in any other writing, will produce the least change in the conduct of the leaders of opposition to the measures of the general government. They have points to carry, from which no reasoning, no inconsistency of conduct, no absurdity can divert them. If, however, such writings should produce conviction in the minds of those who have hitherto placed faith in their assertions, it will be a fortunate event for this country."

This letter was dated 31st December, 1798, and we see in it and the former plainly enough what was Washington's opinion of the crisis which had been brought on by the disorganizing measures of France, and the faction which aided them in this country, and of the steps which our government had taken to weather the storm. As further testimony of the designs which were then in progress against the peace of our country and the stability of the government, I refer the reader to a letter from Gouverneur Morris to M. Necker, dated Altona, September 17th, 1798. It will there be seen that the writer speaks to his distinguished correspondent of the designs of France as a thing well known. He says, "If France decides only to recognise in our country the government of the United States, all that remains will be easily arranged. But if she persists in her disposition to overthrow our government, in order to gratify the ambition of intriguing persons among us, it will be impossible to make peace."

Indeed, Mr. Jefferson's own *Anas* (see the entry of March 27th, 1800,) furnish evidence of this French conspiracy, and Fauchet's intercepted despatches had averred long before that the command of a few thousands would have made it optional with France whether or not there should be a civil war here; and that "the consciences of the pretended patriots of this country had already their prices."

Patrick Henry's testimony as to the danger which threatened "the great pillars of all government and of social life" itself, and that "every thing that ought to be dear to man was covertly but successfully assailed," has been already cited. (See introduction to this work.) And the earnestness of Mr. Henry's belief upon this subject is proved by his having come forward to rescue his country, and to support his old opponents, the federalists.

The authorities here collected are sufficient to prove to every mind capable of appreciating testimony, how pregnant was the crisis which the alien and sedition laws were enacted to meet, and that they were approved by the best hearts and wisest heads of the land. As to their character as high-handed

clear and resulting merit, graduated by reference to acknowledged facts and obvious justice, the least that can be admitted is, that

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measures, and as trenching upon the constitution, they were no more in those respects to the law establishing the embargo "than I to Hercules."

For the preposterous purpose of protecting our commerce by destroying it, and of starving the millions of Europe by withholding the mite of our supplies, our citizens were subjected, by this portentous law, to search of their houses and seizure of their effects upon bare suspicion, unsupported by oath or affirmation—the president was authorized to give *private instructions* to his minions of the custom-houses, which should have the effect of statutes—and to secure the execution of these tyrannical powers, the constitution was further violated, by the eleventh section of this tremendous law, which, depriving the states of the rights reserved to them as to the appointment of the officers of their militia, placed the whole military and naval power of the country under the immediate command of the president, *or any person by him empowered for the purpose.*

The ruin, the distress, the despair which pervaded the whole seaboard under the operation of this law, is well known. But what was its operation in the countries against which it was designed to act? Gen. Armstrong writes to Mr. Madison from France, August 30, 1808—"We have somewhat overrated our means of coercion. Here the embargo is not felt, and in England (in the midst of the more recent events of the day,) *it is forgotten.*" And by a letter from Mr. Pinckney, dated January 26th, it appeared that the British minister received the news of our embargo with great satisfaction.

It is perfectly in keeping with such blind legislation, that this act, novel as it was in our code, and fraught as it necessarily was with the loss of so great an amount of property, should have been forced through the house in four hours, and that even in the senate the most earnest entreaties for time for reflection and discussion, though made by men of the greatest dignity both for their characters and services, should have been drowned in the clamours of the minions of the executive. Well might Mr. Jefferson, when age was impairing his memory, and leaving in it rather the substance than the names of things, write of this period as of a "war then going on," as he did to Mr. Giles December 25th, 1825. For a war was then waged by the majority against the minority, and against those guards of the constitution formed for the protection of a minority. I cannot conclude this note without expressing my occasional distrust of the authorities upon which I have been obliged to rely for some of its facts. The best to which I have been able to refer upon this embargo law is the "*Memoirs of Jefferson,*" before cited. See Vol. II. p. 338, et seq.

But the author of this work, whoever he may have been, was doubtless competent to speak of the motives which divided the federal party in their choice between Jefferson and Burr, in the contest of these gentlemen for the presidency. He says, (Vol. II. p. 88,) "The wishes and hopes of the federalists now rested on a sad choice between two evils;" and that in "every knotty emergency" that party generally looked to Hamilton for guidance—That "he erroneously imagined that the timid cunning of Mr. Jefferson would be less dangerous to the country than the bad principles, joined to the intrepid spirit of Burr, and that there was less to be feared from the crawling hypocrisy of the one than from the bold and unprincipled ambition of the other"—That many of the federalists adopted these views—and thus, "for once, a person owed his election to the chief magistracy of a great country, to his character for timid meanness and incapacity."

Gen. Lee, however, differed with those who adopted these views, and had been too long acquainted with Mr. Jefferson's insincerity to confide in these professions, which the federalists, at least, believed he made, and by that belief were induced, at last, to join in electing him. The event proved that in the latter respect, at any rate, he was not mistaken. For Mr. Jefferson acted

Gen. Lee, although his career was limited, and his opportunities circumscribed, was (not to speak of the purity and elevation of his motives,) in regard to the effects of his conduct, a more useful citizen than Mr. Jefferson. This result will appear not less striking than true, when it is remembered, that Mr. Jefferson, who has been already traced through every variety of contradiction in principle, every shade of confusion as to example, and every degree of misrepresentation of character, and misstatement of fact, closed the series of slanders which gave occasion to these remarks, by affirming, that Gen. Lee, "ought indeed to have been of more truth, or less trusted by his country."\*

If we follow these men into retirement and see how they respectively employed the freedom of leisure, or supported the pressure of misfortune, there will be found something to blame and to praise in both. Gen. Lee entered into a course of sanguine and visionary speculations, endeavouring to acquire wealth, not by rational and productive industry, but by a combination of bargains which could scarcely benefit one party without injury to the other, and which were often mutually detrimental.

To the task of extending and diversifying these transactions so as to make the success of one compensate if possible for the failure of others, he devoted no little amount of misapplied talent and activity; as in bearing up against the weight of distress and ruin which they finally entailed, he wasted a degree of fortitude which, however inglorious the struggle, could not be witnessed without admiration.

The retirement of Mr. Jefferson, as his writings show, was

upon the understanding which it was supposed he had entered into with the federal leaders, and in forming which he played his part so well, that he even deceived the sagacity of Gouverneur Morris, no longer than while delivering his inaugural address. This fair production does, indeed, seem to have felt a federal influence, and to prove that its author had not wholly forgot the inspiration which directed his best labours during the revolution and in the cabinet of Washington. There he speaks as a president of the United States ought to do, of "*that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things*"—of that "*political intolerance, as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions,*" as that which, under the name of religion, had so long afflicted the world—and of the source of those "*throes and convulsions*" whose billows reached "*even this distant and peaceful shore,*" and under the agitations of which we had "*called by different names brethren of the same principles,*" whom he pronounces to be "*all republicans all federalists.*" But what end did these smooth professions serve, beyond the delusion of a day? thereby, alas! to condemn their author's actions out of his own mouth, and to afford a lamentable contrast to the effusions of his latter days, when he gave glory to Governor Gerry "*for the rasping with which he rubbed down his herd of traitors.*" Verily, it will not be with the diffusion of historical light that Gen. Lee's condemnation will increase for preferring even Burr to Jefferson, for a president of the United States.]

[\* So late as September, 1812, the venerable Mr. Jay speaks of him in a letter to a brother of Gen. Lee, as one "whose claims to public gratitude have so long and so justly been acknowledged throughout the United States."]

chiefly devoted to fabricating and diffusing calumnies against the greatest benefactors of his country, and in endeavouring to create and confirm a meretricious estimate of his own merit and fame. In this occupation, pursuing ignoble purposes by unworthy means, he succeeded in planting the generous soil of the public mind with delusions rank and noxious, which could hardly ever have been eradicated but for the fortunate publication of his "Writings." This has admitted the public into the secrets of his *perpetual motion*, and exposed the masks and trickery by which their admiration was suborned and their judgment imposed upon. The most surprising scenes in the solemn and protracted farce are those in which the dupery practised on old Mr. Adams, is exhibited. He appears on the philosophic theatre of Monticello as Mr. Jefferson's Justice Shallow, and consents for a little flattering cajolery about their early association and exploits; for the crumbs of praise left after Mr. Jefferson's banquet; to enter into a coalition\* against the fame of his former friends, not excepting his great predecessor; (Vol. IV. p. 357,) sacrificing his own opinions and affections on the altar of Mr. Jefferson's vanity, for the poor reward of being allowed to snuff the impurity of this unhallowed incense. To the honour of Mrs. Adams, it is to be observed that her heart was too good and her judgment too penetrating, to be ensnared by the blandishments, of which her husband in his old age, was the venerable but unrespected victim. (Vol. IV. p. 158.)

As a noble counterpoise to these malepractices, Mr. Jefferson is entitled to the credit of having created by an honourable zeal for learning, the University of Virginia; of having patronised it against much discouragement, and brought it into successful operation by his own enthusiasm and perseverance. This is a monument to his fame as a citizen, of fair proportion and of solid structure, which as it is likely to counteract their effects, not even his demerits as a statesman and a man, will suffice to undermine.

But if in the hours of leisure, Mr. Jefferson be admitted to have stood above Gen. Lee, in the season of adversity we shall find that he sunk far below him. They both died after being in circumstances of insolvency. Mr. Jefferson was allowed to retain and enjoy his property, was left in possession of his personal liberty and habitual comforts. Thus indulged, he busied his old age in humiliating efforts to excite public sympathy and to sell his estate for more than its value by offering temptations to the compassion rather than to the interest of his fellow-citizens, in the shape of a lottery. His claim to this gambling and invidious privilege, which if granted to him could not justly have been refused to others, he appears to have supported by an array of his public services, which if not mercenary was certainly not modest. (Vol. IV. pp. 434, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.)

Gen. Lee was cast into a loathsome jail, and subjected to the

\* An hereditary habit it would appear of the House of Braintree.

combined persecution of political rancour, personal cupidity, and vulgar malice. Yet he never for a moment lost the dignity of his deportment, or the composure of his mind, never once descended to complaint or stooped to importunity—to the chicanery of angling for lotteries, or to the littleness of attempting to retrieve his private fortune by an array of his public services. The pain of imprisonment he generously soothed by celebrating the exploits of his great commanders, Washington and Greene; by saving from oblivion the names and actions of his companions in arms, and by recording for the instruction of future ages, the principal events of his own life. While he dwelt on these grateful and heroic themes, which smoothed the brow of misfortune, not an unfair opinion or ungenerous sentiment escaped him. His book is stained with no prevarications or calumnies, no evasions or contradictions—no slanders of rivals or of foes, and (though it contains political reflections) there is not to be found in it a single expression disrespectful to the laws of his country, detrimental to the union of the States, or injurious to the rights or liberties of the citizen.

Having thus by Mr. Jefferson's own testimony, justified the intelligence communicated by Gen. Lee to Gen. Washington; having exposed, in a careful analysis, the slander by which Mr. Jefferson's false contradiction of that intelligence was accompanied; and having shown by a detection of repeated inconsistencies, numerous prevarications, and glaring contradictions, that his imputations and assertions, when of a complexion to injure his adversaries or to advantage himself, are not entitled to the slightest credit, I shall complete the task imposed upon me by demonstrating that Mr. Jefferson's abuse of Gen. Lee, so far from imprinting a stain on the memory of the latter, ought in justice to be taken as a flattering evidence of his merit.

This part of my design is not, as you may at first be inclined to think, a work of supererogation. For no matter how unfounded or unjust this abuse may now appear, there is that in the nature of calumny, which causes a blemish to be left by the very process which obliterates its stain. Individuals, will probably be heard to say—I see clearly that Gen. Lee was fully justified in making the communications he did make to Gen. Washington. I am satisfied that Mr. Jefferson's conduct was unjust, ungrateful, and perfidious. It is evident that he frequently overstepped the limits of fair opposition in his political warfare—that he deserted the principles of honour, and was not regulated by the dictates of truth. But he was a good judge of mankind; and it is difficult to believe that he could have felt such detestation of Gen. Lee, as his letter to Gen. Washington of the 19th of June, 1796, expresses, without some reason for it.

To counteract the force of this inference, and to prove that the mark left by Mr. Jefferson's vilification on the character of Gen. Lee, instead of being a sign of disgrace, is really a stamp of honour,

the observations contained in the succeeding letters it is hoped will suffice. In laying them before you I shall not entrench myself behind the trite but just conclusion, that if praise from a friend is not always a compliment, censure from a foe is often an encomium. I shall rather rely on the powerful analogy resulting in Gen. Lee's favour from the fact, that he is placed by Mr. Jefferson's hostility and defamation in the same category with Washington, Hamilton, Knox, Jay, Richard Henry Lee, Marshall, and the other great patriots of that Roman band who gained for our country independence and freedom. And I shall contend, that if nothing else had been done to invalidate his censure and repel his virulence, the inference from this circumstance alone, in regard to the character of Gen. Lee and the credit of Mr. Jefferson would be enough, in the contemplation of all unprejudiced minds, to obscure with shades of dishonour the name of the one, and to irradiate with reflections of glory the memory of the other.

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### LETTER XIII.

#### GENERAL WASHINGTON.

THIS illustrious man, without advantages from birth, wealth, or education, left, for the admiration of posterity, a character, which is acknowledged by the world to place him foremost in the first class of greatness—‘princeps fundatorum imperiorum.’\* He was not admirable for genius, eminent for learning, distinguished for eloquence, or remarkable for address. Judgment, integrity, fortitude, and benevolence, constituted and completed his character; exalting it to perfect magnanimity and the highest wisdom. A simple and sublime pre-eminence that made men of genius, learning, eloquence, and address, his inferiors and instruments. His objects were always noble, his means uniformly justifiable, and his measures the result of deep reflection; so that although his enterprises were occasionally unsuccessful, they never failed to be glorious. He came into life just in season to achieve the independence and establish the freedom of his country, and was withdrawn to a higher existence as soon as the growing strength of our institutions

\* Lord Bacon, on Honour and Reputation.

no longer required his support. His career in this respect resembling the great river of the Alps, which, descending from snow-crowned summits, pours a fuller current through the plains of Italy when they thirst and languish under summer suns. In short, of this Alfred of the western world, it may be said with truth, that his destiny and principles so happily concurred, that he was not only the most meritorious, but the most useful patriot who ever lived.

The impression conveyed by Mr. Jefferson's "Writings" in regard of the character of this champion of liberty, is twofold. First, that he was an honest man, and a sincere patriot, but that from deficient penetration, apathy of political sentiment, and facility of disposition, he was the instrument of a party who were intent on converting our republic into a monarchy; second, that his mind was vigorous and comprehensive, but that his political principles were depraved, that his temper was suspicious, his opinions were monarchical, and that he was the conscious and willing patron of a criminal design against public liberty.

Most of these features, not only thus strikingly contrasted, but often blended and confused, you may recognise in the citations already made from Mr. Jefferson's correspondence.\* But for a condensed view of the dark as well as the dull shades thus thrown on the character of Washington, the following passages appear to be particularly apposite. (Vol. IV. pp. 184, 5.) To Mr. Mellish:—"At the head of this minority is what is called the Essex junto of Massachusetts. But the majority of these *leaders* do not aim at separation. In this they adhere to the known principles of Gen. Hamilton, never under any views to break the Union. Anglomany, monarchy, and separation then, are the principles of the Essex federalists; anglomany and monarchy those of the Hamiltonians." "Gen. Washington has asseverated to me a thousand times his determination that the existing government should have a fair trial, and that in support of it he would spend the last drop of his blood. He did this the more repeatedly because he knew Gen. Hamilton's political bias, and my apprehensions from it." (P. 327.) To Dr. Jones:—"I do believe Gen. Washington had not a firm confidence in the durability of our government. He was naturally distrustful of men, and inclined to gloomy apprehensions; and I was ever persuaded that a belief that we must at length end in something like the British constitution, had some weight in his adoption of the ceremonies of levées, birth-days, pompous meetings with Congress, and other forms of the same character, calculated to prepare us gradually for a change which he believed possible, and to let it come on with as little shock as might be to the public mind." (pp. 450, 51.) In the Anas:—"Here then was the real ground of

\* They may be readily collected from the following pages:—Vol. III. pp. 307, 14, 15, 17, 19, 23, 27, 28, 35, 37, 49, 53, 57, and 58.

the opposition that was made to the course of administration. Its object was to preserve the legislature pure and independent of the Executive, to restrain the administration to republican forms and principles, and not permit the constitution to be warped in practice into all the principles and pollutions of their favourite British model. Nor was this an opposition to Gen. Washington. He was true to the republican charge confided to him, and has solemnly and repeatedly protested to me that he would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it; and he did this the oftener and with the more earnestness, because he knew my suspicions of Hamilton's designs against it, and wished to quiet them. For he was not aware of the drift or of the effects of Hamilton's schemes. Unversed in financial projects and calculations and budgets, his approbation of them was bottomed on his confidence in the man. But Hamilton was not only a monarchist, but for a monarchy bottomed on corruption." "He was for an hereditary King, with a House of Lords and Commons corrupted to his will, and standing between him and the people."

To these passages I shall add an extract of a letter found in Mr. Jefferson's third volume (p. 393,) to Col. Taylor. "But our present situation is not a natural one. The republicans through every part of the Union say, that it was the irresistible influence and popularity of Gen. Washington played off by the cunning of Hamilton, which turned the government over to anti-republican hands, or turned the republicans chosen by the people into anti-republicans. He delivered it over to his successor in this state."

The date of this letter to Col. Taylor is June, 1798; of the statement to Mr. Mellish, January, 1813; of that to Dr. Jones, January, 1814; and of the assertions in the Anas, February, 1818; comprehending in their extremes the space of twenty years. That they abound in inconsistencies and exhibit contradictions, cannot at this stage of the examination excite surprise in the minds of Mr. Jefferson's enemies or friends. These, however they may differ on other points, must agree on this, that it is impossible to believe both sets of his assertions, one describing Gen. Washington as the weak and subservient instrument of Hamilton, the other as his sagacious patron or criminal accomplice.

In reference to the latter imputation it is averred that the design or "drift" of Hamilton's schemes, was by corrupting the legislature to warp the government of the United States "into a monarchy bottomed on corruption;" that Gen. Washington knew of Hamilton's political "bias" or design and knew also Mr. Jefferson's suspicions of it; and that possessing this knowledge he continued his confidence in Hamilton, and endeavoured to quiet Mr. Jefferson's suspicions by protesting over and over again, that he would shed the last drop of his blood in opposing this monarchical scheme, while at the same time he was preparing the public mind for receiving the yoke of a monarchy, with the least possible shock or resistance.

This is the substance and almost the letter of Mr. Jefferson's deliberate and recorded affirmations; and it is clear that if he is entitled to credit, Gen. Washington, whose fame as a patriot is the pride and glory of his country, was not less a traitor than Arnold, and was a far greater criminal than Burr.

If a President of the United States *knows* (letter to Mr. Mellish, Vol. IV. p. 185,) that the Secretary of the Treasury is earnestly endeavouring, by corrupting the legislature, to change our government into a monarchy; (*Anas*, Vol. IV. pp. 446-7,) if he also *knows* that the Secretary of State suspects and reprobates this scheme, and yet endeavours by protesting his own determination to maintain the republic, to quiet these suspicions of the Secretary of State (letters to Mr. Mellish and Dr. Jones,) and *Anas*, (Vol. IV. p. 450,) while at the same time he continues his confidence in the Secretary of the Treasury (*Anas*, 450-51,) and conspires to bring about the success of his schemes by preparing the public mind for submission to a monarchy; (letter to Dr. Jones) if I say with this knowledge, the President of the United States pursues this conduct, it matters not whether his name be Washington or Jackson, Jefferson or Madison, whether he be "a military chieftain" or "a mountain philosopher," he commits the blackest treason, incurs the deepest disgrace, and is liable to the extremest punishment. It may be worth observing that inasmuch as the levées, and other "forms of the British government" were adopted by Gen. Washington previously to the production of Hamilton's plan of finance, the idolaters of Mr. Jefferson are bound to believe that Gen. Washington was not only the patron, but the author of the design imputed to Hamilton, of converting the republican government of the United States into a monarchy.

If the atrocity of this flagrant slander could admit of aggravation, it might be derived from the sportive and sacrilegious temper in which Mr. Jefferson tosses the dear-bought and venerated fame of Washington to any whale that happened for the moment to be spouting on the surface of the political ocean. On one occasion he asserts that Gen. Washington was aware of Hamilton's scheme, at another that he was ignorant of it. At one moment he declares that Gen. Washington was "true to the republican charge confided to him," was resolved to "shed the last drop of his blood" in perpetuating our republic; at the next, that he was taking measures to prepare the people for quiet submission to a monarchy. To Mr. Van Buren he owns, as you no doubt remember, that in March, 1797, he had a warm and affectionate parting with Gen. Washington, while he assures Dr. Jones, (Vol. IV. p. 237,) that he never saw Gen. Washington after his own retirement from the cabinet, in December, 1793; adding in the former case, that there never was the least interruption of their friendship; in the latter, and more particularly in the introduction to the *Anas*, (Vol. IV. p. 453,) that

Gen. Washington, towards the close of his life became *personally alienated* from him.

One of his assertions is so often repeated, that it is a little surprising to find such absolute uniformity in a fiction so obvious. He says, and repeats the assertion, that Gen. Washington asseverated to him a thousand times that he would "spend" or "shed" the last drop of his blood in support of our republic. Now, independently of the incongruity of this anecdote, with the well known character of Washington—with his dignity, prudence, and modesty, with his infinite elevation above the vanity and egotism of a *life and fortune-man*, we have the best testimony which Mr. Jefferson's statements afford, that this reiterated assertion is false.

It cannot be necessary to remark that the best testimony to be collected from Mr. Jefferson's writings, in regard to the character of Gen. Washington and his political friends, is circumstantial. His memoranda of conversations with the President are introduced by the most careful protestation of their fidelity and correctness. (Vol. IV. beginning of the Anas.) They extend in time from March, 1791, to December, 1793; that is, more than two years and a half—and they include upwards of fifty different notices. In these, Mr. Jefferson's suspicions of monarchical designs are three times introduced, (Vol. IV. pp. 470–85 and 93,) but on neither of these occasions, nor on any other, does Gen. Washington make use of the expressions which Mr. Jefferson affirms he employed on all occasions.

In the first of these conversations, although Mr. Jefferson assured Gen. Washington that "the Secretary of the Treasury, Gen. Schuyler, his father-in-law, and a numerous sect, had monarchy in contemplation," the General, so far from promising to "shed the last drop of his blood," in maintaining the republic, ridicules the idea of such a charge against Hamilton and his party, and makes no other observation in regard to it than that "he did not believe there were ten men in the United States whose opinions were worth attention, who entertained such a thought;" evidently excluding Hamilton from that small number, by proposing to act as mediator in bringing about a reconciliation between him and Mr. Jefferson of their political and personal difference.

On the second occasion, (p. 485,) in alluding to this imputed design, Gen. Washington said—"if any body wanted to change our government into a monarchy, he was sure it was only a few individuals, and that no man in the United States would set his face against it more than himself." Now this is quite a different expression both in words and substance from the bloody slang of Mr. Jefferson's invention. Gen. Washington could not but know that all who suspected there was a design of introducing a monarchy would be inclined to look upon him as the future monarch; and while he was not so boastful or loose as to talk of spending or shedding his blood, he was prudent enough to declare distinctly

that he would be no party to such a project. In this there was neither unseemly vehemence, vanity, nor egotism, nor the least departure from "the laws of his character."

On the third occasion, (p. 493,) he uses the same language, and adds, that "for any set of men to entertain the idea of establishing a monarchy in the United States," would be "proof of their insanity"—intimating that as the design would be desperate, the suspicion of it was absurd.

It is impossible, then, to believe, that out of respect for a suspicion so ridiculous, and in consideration of a project so contemptible, Gen. Washington would have poured forth foaming protestations of his resolution to shed the last drop of his blood in support of the Republic!

To acquire a more complete conception of these misstatements and contradictions, it will be necessary for you to bear in mind, that Mr. Jefferson, in making them, assumed the attitude of a witness, and placed his correspondents in the position of comparative strangers. He speaks in a tone of historical dictation and from professed personal knowledge, of facts, that could not have been known to the individuals in question, and adapts to *his* facts, conclusions which neither of his correspondents, and but very few even of his earlier contemporaries, could have had the means of scrutinizing by comparison with observations of their own. In writing these conflicting aspersions, he must be considered as saying to his correspondents, and in leaving them for publication, to the world—*though my portraiture of Gen. Washington may strike you with surprise; you are not to doubt its fidelity and exactness, for you must remember that I was his prime minister for more than four years, and had, during that time, "daily, confidential, and cordial intercourse with him,"* (Vol. IV. p. 237,) on subjects calculated to display the obvious, and to reveal the latent, principles of his character. You must take into account, that I studied his disposition through an acquaintance of near thirty years, (Ibid.) in the legislature of Virginia, and in the Congress of the United States; in the intimacy of frequent correspondence, as well as in the fellowship of Cabinet labours. If you have any confidence then in my judgment, you must reject your own crude impressions, and adopt my conclusions, grounded on the long, intimate, official, and familiar acquaintance with Gen. Washington, which it was my peculiar advantage to enjoy.

This is the imposing and oracular tone in which Mr. Jefferson disseminates the "matter deep and dangerous," which I have here disentangled from the complexity of less glaring and more timid slanders. To measure the distance of its departure from truth, would be as difficult as to put a girdle round about the earth.

But the degree of indignation which it would have excited in the noble breast of Washington may be conceived, not only from the force and purity of his character, but from expressions found in a

letter of his, to Mr. Jay, written about the time the insufficiency of the old confederation was threatening to produce distractions among the States, and the downfall of republican government. "What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing! I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking, proceeds speaking, then to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism, to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious. Would to God, that wise measures may be taken in time, to avert the consequences we have too much reason to apprehend."\* Wise measures were taken in time, and by no men more actively than by Jay and Hamilton.

That this indignation would not have been appeased, by the artful or fearful qualifications with which Mr. Jefferson endeavoured occasionally to conceal his calumnies—such as, that Gen. Washington was "the only honest man who assented to Jay's treaty," that he was "played off by the cunning of Hamilton," and that the odious measures of his government were "imputable not to him, but to his counsellors," may be inferred from remarks ascribed to him by Mr. Jefferson himself, (Vol. IV. pp. 467, 468.) "The President said that the pieces lately published, and particularly in Freneau's paper, seemed to have in view the exciting opposition to the Government,"—"He considered those papers as attacking him directly, for he must be a fool indeed to swallow the little sugar-plums here and there thrown out to him. That in condemning the administration of the general government, they condemned him, for if they thought there were measures pursued contrary to his sentiments, they must suppose him too careless to attend to them, or too stupid to understand them."

But it is not improbable that the more incurable proselytes of Mr. Jefferson, tenants of the shade of vanity and prejudice, worshippers of words, who have been attached to the name of Jefferson, by motives as liberal, as that which attached moths to his garments, may insist that the *imbroglio* of imputations, qualifications, assertions, and contradictions, which we have been considering, is not a fair exposition of Mr. Jefferson's testimony respecting the character of Gen. Washington; and that an equitable commentator on his "Writings," would refer to his famous letter to Dr. Jones, (Vol. IV. p. 234,) for a sketch, doing justice at once to the merit of the subject, and to the skill of the artist.

Without perceiving the advantage which this letter is to afford Mr. Jefferson's reputation, or the possibility of extricating its statements from contradiction, with his assertions made before and

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 96.

after it was written, respect for the fanatical despair with which it has been, and probably may be lauded by his followers, makes it proper to invite your attention to it. It contains an elaborate description of Gen. Washington, in terms, though not of just delineation, yet occasionally of strenuous praise. But if the circumstances under which it was written be considered, it reflects more light on the character of Mr. Jefferson than it sheds on that of Gen. Washington.

It is dated the 2nd of January, 1814, and appears to be in answer to a letter from Dr. Jones, enclosing for the inspection of Mr. Jefferson a political essay, which the Doctor had prepared on the rise and progress of the federal and democratic parties. Dr. Jones, who was a pungent and polished writer, and a gentleman of classical taste and erudition, had expressed a fear of encountering as many difficulties in endeavouring to carry Gen. Washington safe through the denunciations and abuse, which, in conformity with Mr. Jefferson's precept and example, it was necessary for his partisans to heap on the federal party, as beset Æneas when he bore Anchises through Grecian lances and the flames of Troy. That he had expressed this apprehension, is evident from the following observation in Mr. Jefferson's answer. (P. 235.) "You say, that in taking Gen. Washington on your shoulders, to bear him harmless through the federal coalition, you encounter a perilous topic." Oppressed by this reasonable apprehension, Dr. Jones implored that aid from the god of his idolatry, which in a case of similar distress, a divinity had extended to his pious predecessor. To satisfy this prayer, Mr. Jefferson's letter was despatched from the clouds of that little Olympus, Monticello; and its import must, no doubt, have appeared supernatural to the Doctor, when he discovered that the machinery interposed for his deliverance, was the transformation of Gen. Washington into a democrat—into a beloved and loving confederate of Messrs. Jefferson, Giles, and Freneau; the very men who had openly reviled, or secretly slandered himself, his friends, and his measures. Beginning his sketch with a far-fetched and intruded comparison, in order to divert the Doctor's attention from its inconsistency with the current of all his previous defamation, he thus addresses himself to the subject. "I think I knew Gen. Washington intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these.

"His mind was great and powerful without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no general ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if

any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in a re-adjustment. The consequence was, he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and York. He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest, or consanguinity, of friendship, or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally irritable and high toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses, he was honourable but exact; liberal in contributions, to whatever promised utility; but frowning and unyielding on all visionary projects, and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, his deportment easy, erect, and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback,"—"On the whole, his character was, in the mass, perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same Constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example.

"How then can it be perilous for you to take such a man on your shoulders?" And he winds up with—"these are my opinions of Gen. Washington, which I would vouch at the judgment-seat of God, having been formed on an acquaintance of thirty years." Yet of this pure and elevated patriot, with a mind so great and powerful, a penetration so strong, a judgment so lucid, a prudence so predominating, of inflexible justice, moderate affections, calculating confidences, and long and meritorious services, Mr. Jefferson, after thirty years of acquaintance with him, declared, "I wish that his honesty and his political errors may not furnish a second occasion to exclaim, "curse on his virtues, they have undone his country,"—and that he had "truckled servilely to England."

Of Washington, who he confesses, "was in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man;" and who "had the singular merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence, and of conducting its councils through the birth of a government new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train," he deprecated to Col. Burr and others, the popularity and influence. And in regard to his administration, Mr. Jefferson assured Col. Taylor, that Washington had delivered the government to his successor in an anti-republican state; informed Mr. Livingston that it was "republicanism travestie;" and protested to Mr. Madison, that he was rejoiced to see that "the birth-night balls were not those of the President but the General, and of course that time would bring an end of them."

Now as these statements and opinions never were retracted, it is very clear that this tardy and unatoning praise, so far from extracting the poison, or allaying the acrimony of previous detraction, really aggravates them, since it proves that Mr. Jefferson, at the very time he was defaming the character of Gen. Washington, was perfectly sensible of his eminent services, and his great abilities and virtue.

But, as if to crown this hypocritical panegyric with a suitable degree of effrontery, he affirms both in this letter to Dr. Jones, and in a subsequent one to Mr. Van Buren, that although he and his friends saw clearly the faults and errors of Washington, they took into consideration the honesty of the old gentleman's intentions, and after they "had tumbled his seducers from their places," heartily forgave him. His words to Dr. Jones, are (Vol. IV. p. 237,) "We were indeed dissatisfied with him as to the British treaty. But this was short-lived. We knew his honesty, the wiles with which he was encompassed, and that age (Gen. Washington was sixty-three only,) had already begun to relax the firmness of his purposes," &c. This is, beyond all dispute, the most diabolical impudence that ever escaped from the nether to the upper world.

It is not worth while to point out the intrinsic fallacies of this elaborate description of Gen. Washington, or to show that his eulogist was so unaccustomed to speak of him in the language of praise, that he could not avoid absurdities and error. The comparison with Bacon, Newton, and Locke, is less appropriate than a parallel with Paganini would now be; for in his younger days, Washington, it is said, played the fiddle, while it is well known that he never wrote on metaphysics, astronomy, or the augmentation of knowledge, by the employment of inductive reasoning. The idea of proving the inflexibility of his justice, by affirming that no motives of friendship could influence it, and then declaring that "his heart was not warm in its affections," is not a happy one, especially as the latter assertion is unfounded. For independently of traditional evidence, it is not easy to conceive that Gen. Wash-

ington, with the "quick sensibility" ascribed to him by Marshall, and the "high-toned and irritable temper" which Mr. Jefferson says he possessed, could have had a "heart not warm in its affections."

The natural incompatibility which subsisted between them may well have made him appear cold to Mr. Jefferson, but his friendship for Gen. Lee, in particular, is known to have been exceedingly warm; and open to the utmost familiarity.

So far from being "naturally distrustful of men," as Dr. Jones is assured he was, his persevering confidence in Mr. Jefferson himself, even after he had been warned of his treachery,\* is proof of the contrary, and is in conformity with the acknowledged strength and magnanimity of his character.

The military remarks in this sketch are worthy of the great an-

[\* It appears from Gen. Washington's letter to John Nicholas, of March 8th, 1798, (Vol. XI. p. 227,) how long it was before the former became convinced of Mr. Jefferson's secret hostility. But from that it appears in a light which must pierce even the deepest "shades of vanity and prejudice," that he did not go down to the grave in ignorance of his former Secretary and long professed friend's insincerity. He says—"Nothing short of the evidence you have adduced, corroborative of intimations which I had received long before through another channel, could have shaken my belief in the sincerity of a friendship, which I had conceived was possessed for me by the person to whom you allude, (Mr. Jefferson.) But attempts to injure those who are supposed to stand well in the estimation of the people, and are stumbling blocks in the way, by misrepresenting their political tenets, thereby to destroy all confidence in them, are among the means by which the government is to be assailed, and the constitution destroyed. The conduct of this party is systematized; and every thing that is opposed to its execution will be sacrificed without hesitation or remorse, if the end can be answered by it."]

"If the person whom you suspect was really the author of the letter under the signature of *John Langhorne*, it is not at all surprising to me, that the correspondence should have ended where it did; for the penetration of *that man* would have perceived by the first glance at the answer, that nothing was to be drawn from that mode of attack. In what form the next insidious attempts may appear, remains to be discovered. But as the attempts to explain away the constitution, and weaken the government, are now become so open, and the desire of placing the affairs of this country under the influence and control of a foreign nation is so apparent and strong, it is hardly to be expected that a resort to covert means to effect these objects will be longer regarded."

This letter continues through more than another melancholy page, and Mr. Jefferson is again alluded to, but yet not named. Were it not for the notes of the Editor the uninitiated reader would not know who was referred to; and had it not been for the insidious attempt upon his peace by the communication under the fictitious signature of *John Langhorne*, he would probably have been spared the pangs of friendship betrayed and benefits forgot, plainly discoverable in this letter. For his friends truly wished him that repose to which he had earned the best title which had ever been acquired to it, and were anxious to shield his noble heart from the wounds of that ingratitude, which stalked for awhile in the land, soon to disappear under a burst of execration, almost universal. If, therefore, the arts and malignity of Jacobinism had been contented to let him rest in the shades to which he had retired—had not dogged him to his fireside, and stole upon his presence in the shape of an effusion of gratitude and love,—it is more than probable that its great American high priest would have escaped the infliction of that "lost correspondence," the fraudulent removal and destruction of which, clouds his character with such painful suspicions.]

tagonist of Arnold. After asserting that no general ever planned his battles more judiciously than Washington did, he states as a consequence, that he "often failed in the field, and rarely in a siege—as at York and Boston!" His assertion that Gen. Washington "scrupulously obeyed the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military" is proof of the 'vein' in which he was writing. He knew that in foraging on the farms of New Jersey and Pennsylvania for the supply of his army with food, Gen. Washington violated the laws of those States providing for the security of property. And that in authorizing Gen. Lee, when only twenty-three years of age, and in the subordinate rank of Major, to execute deserters without a trial, he was violating the laws securing life; and that in both cases he acted as Gen. Jackson afterwards acted at New Orleans, on the great laws of moral justice and public necessity.

There are circumstances connected with the acknowledgment on the part of Dr. Jones, that it was impossible to "bear Gen. Washington on his shoulders harmless through the federal coalition"—in other words, that it was impossible to represent the friends and measures of Gen. Washington as corrupt and monarchical, without censuring him, which fall in with the present occasion and deserve to be noticed. In the final struggle of the Federal and Democratic parties, the one to gain, and the other to preserve an ascendancy in the national councils, Gen. Lee, at the instance of Gen. Washington and other friends, became a candidate for Congress, in that district of Virginia which included the birth-place of Gen. Washington, and bordered on the one which included his residence. The candidate opposed to Gen. Lee, and representing the opinions of the Jefferson party, was this very Dr. Jones. So that these competitors were known to be the personal and political friends, the one of Jefferson and the other of Washington—were looked on as the champions of their adverse wishes and sentiments, and of course engaged in a peculiar degree the zeal of their respective parties. Dr. Jones, though surpassed by no man in colloquial elegance and irony, was no match for his antagonist in popular address and public eloquence, and after an animated canvass, Gen. Lee was elected by a small majority of votes. This ardent and signal competition served to heighten the opposition of sentiment between Gen. Lee and Dr. Jones; and it may be affirmed in respect of them, that though personal friends, there were no two citizens of the United States, at that time, whose political opinions and predilections were more pointedly antagonists than theirs were. Yet we find them concurring on this subject, that Mr. Jefferson had expressed and countenanced opinions derogating from the character of Gen. Washington, and which if true rendered it impossible to believe that he was not inexcusably culpable.

These derogatory expressions and opinions, running through all the varieties of slander from prevarications to inconsistencies, from

inconsistencies to contradictions, need not be recapitulated. The observations which have been already applied to them will satisfy you of the selfish purpose for which they were uttered, and cannot fail to convince you that from their author, censure and abuse were more complimentary, than the highest approbation or the warmest praise.

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## LETTER XIV.

FOR wisdom and merit, patriotic services, and political ability, among the founders of our republic, ALEXANDER HAMILTON stands second to Washington alone—a position which reflects the brightest glory on them both. With a zeal fed by continual ardour, he devoted to the varying exigencies of his country, a mind whose resources proved always greater than the greatest occasions. His invention was quick, his judgment strong, his understanding capacious, his penetration acute, and his memory faithful. He was prudent in council,\* daring in the field,† eloquent in the Senate, cogent and persuasive as a writer, expeditious and indefatigable in the administration of affairs, disinterested, liberal, firm and enthusiastic. In matters of private feeling and personal honour, his frankness and spirit were proverbial, and in his last act‡ were perhaps excessive.

\* An anecdote of Hamilton recorded in Gen. Wilkinson's memoirs, and which was before current in conversation, evinces his extreme sagacity as a military counsellor. A plan had been devised by Gen. Washington, while the British army lay in New York, for seizing the person of Sir H. Clinton, then the English Commander-in-Chief. It was considered, determined on, and on the point of being put in execution, when Hamilton suggested to Gen. Washington, that although it might succeed, and for a time create a favourable impression, he was of opinion it would be more advantageous to the enemy than to the Americans; inasmuch as they knew Clinton to be by no means a formidable antagonist, were acquainted with his plans and official habits: whereas if they removed him, his successor could hardly fail to be a more efficient adversary. This view of the subject convinced Washington that it was more advisable to preserve than to remove the British Commander-in-Chief, and the project was abandoned.

† He led the party which took by assault the redoubt on the British left, at the siege of York.—Marshall, Vol. IV. p. 485.

‡ Gen. Hamilton was killed in a duel by Col. Burr, in July, 1804. He went to the ground determined to receive but not to return his adversary's fire, and acted on this determination—thus offering up his own life to a sense of honour,

“Animæque magnæ  
Prodigum paulum.”

Of a life, the term of which fell short of fifty years, he gave twenty to the public service, and left it poor in every thing but a title to renown and honour. This, nor a cruel death, nor a neglected grave, nor a calumnious rival, could take away; and as a devoted patriot, an accomplished soldier, statesman, orator, scholar, and gentleman, the memory of Hamilton will bloom and flourish, as long as the admiration of mankind shall attend exalted genius, heroic virtues, generous affections, and glorious deeds.

The main drift of Mr. Jefferson's “Writings,” as far as they refer to the political history of his own times, is, as you must have observed, to impress a persuasion that Hamilton was at heart a traitor—that he not only devised but designed a change of our government into a monarchy—that in order to perpetrate this infamous project, he invented a scheme no less infamous, for corrupting the federal legislature, and maintained a criminal understanding with the British Government, and with the British envoy in the United States.

This imputation against Hamilton, which is put forward with as much confidence as could be manifested in calling Arnold a traitor, is distinctly embodied in the citations already made from the letter to Mr. Mellish—and from the introduction to the *Anas*. And although it is made by a man who bore no part either in defending the liberties of the country, or in framing or in establishing the republican system constructed for securing them; and against a man, who in all these labours took a large and conspicuous share, it is supported by no better evidence than what may be found in the following passage of a letter from Mr. Jefferson to Dr. Rush. (Vol. IV. pp. 155-6.) “While Mr. Adams was Vice President and I Secretary of State, I received a letter from President Washington, then at Mount Vernon, desiring me to call together the heads of departments, and to invite Mr. Adams to join us, (which by the bye was the only instance of that being done,) in order to determine on some measure which required despatch; and he desired me to act on it as decided, without again recurring to him.\* I invited them to dine with me; and after dinner, sitting at our wine, having settled our question, other conversation came on, in which a collision of opinion arose between Mr. Adams and Col. Hamilton, on the merits of the British Constitution, Mr. Adams

and shielding his enemy's by a feeling of religion. He left behind him a paper explaining his motives on the melancholy occasion, in which he declared that as a military man he could not refuse the invitation of Col. Burr—while as a christian he would not shed the blood of a fellow-creature in private combat.

\* Here Mr. Jefferson might have observed that as Gen. Washington was at this time on his tour to the Southern States—then but slowly and rarely visited by the public mail—a reference to the Vice President, and non-recurrence to the President, on a subject requiring despatch, were seasonable and proper.

giving it as his opinion, that if some of its defects and abuses were corrected, it would be the most perfect constitution of government ever devised by man. Hamilton on the contrary asserted, that with its existing vices, it was the most perfect model of government that could be formed; and that the correction of its vices would render it an impracticable government. And this you may be assured was the real line of difference between the political principles of these two gentlemen. Another incident took place on the same occasion, which will further delineate Hamilton's political principles. The room being hung around with a collection of the portraits of remarkable men, among them were those of Bacon, Newton, and Locke. Hamilton asked me who they were. I told him they were my trinity of the three greatest men the world had ever produced, naming them. He paused for some time: "the greatest man," said he, "that ever lived was Julius Cæsar."

Now if any man can contemplate this pompous parade of insignificant circumstances without laughing, he must have a singular insensibility to the ridiculous, or a surprising command of his countenance. In regard to proof—although it is substantially repeated with a solemn attestation to God, (Vol. IV. p. 450,) it possesses not as much as Falstaff's company of recruits did of linen. As this latter version affects to be verbatim, and therefore to exclude any allowances for inaccuracy of language, it will be doing Mr. Jefferson justice to submit it in preference for consideration, "Mr. Adams observed, 'purge that constitution of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man.' Hamilton paused and said, 'purge it of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would become an *impracticable* government; as it stands at present, with all its supposed defects, it is the most perfect government that ever existed.'

Even admitting that all this is true, that what Hamilton did say and mean was accurately understood and fairly recorded by Mr. Jefferson, can any reasonable man, any man out of Bedlam, or not destined for that asylum, infer from this anecdote, the existence of a design in the breast of Hamilton to overturn our republic? In the month of April, 1791, three gentlemen, we are told, were sitting at their wine in Philadelphia, all of them by study and practice statesmen; and the subject of the British Constitution happening to be mentioned, one of them observed, that by purging it of the corrupt influence of the crown and aristocracy, and equalising the right of voting for representatives, it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man. One of the three gentlemen contested this point, asserted that the alteration suggested would render the British Government an *impracticable* one, that as it stood it was the most perfect government that ever existed. The third gentleman, who is master of the house, says nothing,

neither assents to, nor dissents from, either opinion, but carefully notes down this casual conversation, as proof of an intention in the second gentleman, to convert the government of the United States, by corrupting the Legislature, into a monarchy.

Now which of those parties was most likely to betray his friend or his country? which was most fit for stratagems and treasons? the unsuspecting guest who made a speculative assertion, the main point of which few men at that time would have thought of questioning, and who little deemed he was subjecting himself for trial on his allegiance; or the attentive host, who with a malice that hospitality could not allay, and a suspicion which wine could not suspend, "sifted this table conversation," and slipped it into the poisoned quiver of his memory, to be directed at "a propitious season," against the unguarded honour of his companion and colleague? This question admits of but one answer, and that of no excuse for Mr. Jefferson.

Let it be recollected that our government had then been but two years in operation, was confessed on all hands to be an *experiment* delicate and doubtful, was still exposed to the opposition and antipathy of many great patriots, and was thought by its best friends to be attended by as many chances of failure as success. Let it be remembered also, that besides many of its most important forms, its leading principles, such as the representative system, the trial by jury, the liberty of the press, the benefit of the *habeas corpus* act, and exemption from *ex post facto* laws, were directly derived from the British Constitution: and it will be difficult to conceive what other constitution than that of England, a man of reading and reflection, could, at the date of this imputed conversation, have considered the best that ever existed. He could not be expected to bring ours into comparison, for our State governments being provincial and domestic in their nature, were incommensurable with complete and paramount systems; our first experiment on a general plan had signally failed, and our second had not been tested by time or trial, while the incipient steps of its progress encountered violent opposition, and exposed it to severe strictures. Under these circumstances it would have been less logical than ludicrous to subject it to a comparison with old governments, in respect of the indispensable property of duration. It would have been either below or above the line of reason and argument, would have been a *petitio principii*, or a prophecy.

Seeing then that our political nursling could not have been in the contemplation of Hamilton, it would appear probable that in order to escape the malediction of Mr. Jefferson, he should have declared a preference for the government of France, Spain or Russia—for the despotism of mobs, bigots, or autocrats.

It follows from all this, admitting that a speculative opinion of any sort respecting the advantages of a foreign government, should at any time be taken as a test of patriotism in a citizen of the

United States, that the man who in conformity with the opinions of Montesquieu and De Lolme, expressed in the year 1791, admiration for the British government, evinced, so far, respect and attachment for the analogous system which Washington and Hamilton had exerted themselves to establish, were endeavouring to administer for the benefit, and to confirm in the affections of their countrymen.

The fairest view of the subject is however afforded by the consideration, that while Hamilton, who had assisted in framing the constitution, and had surpassed (Mr. Madison alone excepted) all his fellow-citizens in recommending it with zeal and ability to the people of the United States, is here represented as an enemy to the constitution, and a traitor to his country, his hospitable accuser (having borne no part in the formation of the constitution) had declared himself neutral in the contest between its advocates and its enemies, had expressed, while the event of Hamilton's struggle for its success was doubtful (Vol. II. pp. 274 and 78,) decided opposition to some of its essential provisions, subsequently encouraged an insurrection against its laws, (Vol. IV. pp. 308 *et passim*,) invented a political aconite for its destruction, (Vol. IV. pp. 344,) and to his latest breath maintained an unceasing hostility against its conservative department. (Vol. IV. p. 337.)

This contrast speaks as strongly in favour of the modesty as of the equity of Mr. Jefferson. And it shews that even if our government, which was then in its cradle, could be supposed to have been within the contemplation of the parties to the "table conversation" confessed to have been "sifted" by Mr. Jefferson, good taste and good breeding would have united to deter Gen. Hamilton from extolling a system, which was known to have been in part the subject of his own creation, the theme of his successful commendation, and which was at the same time understood to have engaged any thing but the predilection of his entertainer. As to the alleged difference of opinion between Mr. Adams and Gen. Hamilton on the hypothetical alteration of the British Constitution, that was a subject so perfectly abstract, that it is impossible to derive from it the remotest inference, in regard of the political character or fidelity of either of those gentlemen. The probability is, however, that from the less extended diffusion of political knowledge among the people of England at that period, the system of Parliamentary reform now under their consideration, would, if adopted then, have endangered the stability of the British Government, and, as Hamilton observed, rendered it impracticable.

If it were not from an apprehension that I might appear to think that Hamilton's character for patriotism required to be proved, I should observe that if his intentions were as Mr. Jefferson alleges, treasonable, and his "cunning" so great as to enable him to "play off" the influence of a man so "wise, great, and prudent," as Dr. Jones is assured Gen. Washington was, it is absurd to suppose that

he would have made use of a remark in controversy with the Vice-President, and in presence of the Secretary of State, of a nature to betray his meditated treason. But as I have all along argued upon the admission that this conversation actually took place, the natural question whether Mr. Jefferson's assertion to that effect is true, remains to be considered.

The earliest mention of it to be found in his writings, is in the letter to Dr. Rush above referred to, and dated January the 16th, 1811, about twenty years after it is said to have occurred. Throughout this tract of time his hatred and crimination of Hamilton, flowed in a continued and unadulterated stream of bitterness. He affirms that on the 10th of July, 1792, he told Gen. Washington, that Hamilton "had monarchy in contemplation," and as proof of this charge that he had heard Hamilton "say that our constitution was a shilly-shally thing of mere milk and water, &c." In December, 1800, he describes Hamilton to Col. Burr as "the evil genius of his country." In July, 1801, Levi Lincoln is assured that Hamilton's object was to "sap the republic by fraud, if he could not destroy it by force, and to erect an English monarchy in its place." (Vol. III. p. 471). Yet on none of these occasions is this conversation related or alluded to, which when mentioned to Dr. Rush, is considered *par excellence* as incontestible proof in support of this charge of monarchy and treason.

Again—to show that nothing like accuracy was observed in detailing it, a gross inconsistency may be pointed out between the two versions of it that have been referred to. In the letter to Dr. Rush it is said, that the President wrote to Mr. Jefferson, desiring him to call together the heads of departments and to invite the Vice-President to join them in order to consult and determine on a particular measure which required despatch, and instructing him to act on that particular measure in conformity with this determination of the cabinet and Vice-President, without recurrence to the President.

In the introduction to the *Anas*, on the contrary, it is asserted that Gen. Washington instead of writing a special letter to Mr. Jefferson, desiring him thus to consult and act on a particular measure requiring despatch, wrote a circular letter to all the Secretaries, instructing them generally and prospectively, to pursue this course on any measures that might require the action of the government during his absence. Further, in the *Anas*, in order to give a deeper colour to Hamilton's treason, it is averred, (and in attestation of the truth of the assertion Mr. Jefferson invokes "the God who made him") that when about to dispute the observation of Mr. Adams respecting the British constitution, "he paused." But in the letter to Dr. Rush this dramatic pause is put with more poetical justice before the remark respecting Julius Cæsar. But at whatever time the pause of this pregnant anecdote was made, either over the corruption of the British constitution, or in front of

"the world's great master and his own," it shews that when Hamilton was about to talk treason he was apt to make a significant stop, in order to rivet the attention of his auditors. And it is probable that to this oratorical art, Mr. Jefferson was indebted for the privilege of being able after the lapse of twenty-seven years, to repeat this "table conversation" verbatim; and under the sanction of an appeal to God, in proof of its literal accuracy.

Upon the whole it appears, as well from the general tenor of Mr. Jefferson's assertions respecting the character of his political enemies, as from the inconsistency of his statements on this particular subject, that the only reason for believing that the remarks here put into the mouth of Gen. Hamilton were actually uttered by him, is, that they are perfectly compatible with the character of a patriotic citizen and an enlightened man.

But Mr. Jefferson produces from the same dialogue, "another incident," which he seems with great reason to consider as equally efficacious in proving Hamilton's political turpitude. It is, as you have already seen, that at Mr. Jefferson's hospitable board, Hamilton said "Julius Cæsar was the greatest man that ever lived." And to aggravate the enormity of this open attempt on the liberties of his country, Hamilton it would seem made this daring assertion after Mr. Jefferson had told him that Bacon, Newton and Locke were the greatest men "the world had ever produced."

The inference here attempted, it must be confessed, "at one bound high overleaps all bounds." It is however of the true Jeffersonian *press-copy* stamp, under which assurance and malice were circulated for fairness and truth. This monstrous and abominable opinion which Hamilton had the audacity to utter, and with the emphasis of a preliminary pause, to propel against the patriotic nerves of Mr. Jefferson, happened not only to coincide with the opinion of the world, but to be in exact conformity with the *dictum* of Lord Bacon, who in one of his Essays observes that "Julius Cæsar was the most complete character of all antiquity."

It may however be urged, that in the lapse of years between the commencement of modern history and the year 1791, there had lived men, among them Bacon, Newton, and Locke, for whom Hamilton, in order to save his political virtue, ought to have expressed greater admiration than for Julius Cæsar. Yet Montesquieu, the philosopher of liberty and law, who died about the time Hamilton was born, (1755,) has left on his immortal pages the same opinion;\* as has Lord Byron,† who lived after Hamilton was dead, who was the devoted friend of human freedom, risked his fortune and his life in an attempt to rescue Italy from servitude, and expired in a generous struggle for the liberty of Greece. As Lord Bacon was Mr. Jefferson's principal idol, it would follow that the

\* *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*, Chap. XI.

† Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto iv. Stanza xc. note 47.

charge of bribery and corruption in office, would, by his own reasoning, lie against Mr. Jefferson, inasmuch as Lord Bacon was convicted, fined and disgraced for that offence.

You will easily recollect that on one occasion, in order to fix deeply on the memory of Hamilton this charge of treason, Mr. Jefferson ventures the length of asserting that Gen. Washington knew of Hamilton's corrupt and monarchical designs. (Letter to Mr. Mellish, Vol. IV. p. 185.) His language on that occasion is—“General Washington has asseverated to me a thousand times his determination that the existing government should have a fair trial, and that in support of it he would spend the last drop of his blood. He did this the more repeatedly, because he knew Gen. Hamilton's political bias and my apprehensions from it.” Now it may be said that the words “*political bias*” do not convey the imputation of a *criminal design*. But on the previous page Mr. Jefferson himself thus explains their meaning. “*Anglomania*, monarchy, and separation, these are the principles of the Essex federalists; *Anglomania and monarchy* those of the Hamiltonians.” Here we see that the words “*political bias*” were used as equivalent with the phrase *political principles*, and that the principles on which Gen. Hamilton acted were those of monarchy and *Anglomania*, a term which Mr. Jefferson appears to have coined in France for purposes of calumny in his own country. Besides, when speaking on the same subject he uses synomyms for *bias* which establish clearly the force which he intended to give that term; as at page 237, of the 4th volume:—“And these declarations he repeated to me the oftener and the more pointedly because he knew my suspicions of Hamilton's *views*;” that is, that his “*views*” (or *bias*) were to introduce a monarchy in the United States like that of England. In addition, it is obvious that *bias* must have been intended to signify something grave and atrocious, as it is placed as the ground-work of Gen. Washington's “thousand and one” protestations, and the mainspring of Mr. Jefferson's sincere and philosophical apprehensions.

There can then be no doubt, that by asserting Washington's knowledge of Hamilton's “*political bias*,” Mr. Jefferson meant to affirm that Hamilton was engaged in a scheme to overturn, by corrupting the legislature, the existing government of the United States, and to establish in its stead a monarchical government, and that Gen. Washington knew he was engaged in this scheme. But at page 450, when laying a different train of deception, when endeavouring to prove that Gen. Washington did not espouse or countenance the political principles of Hamilton, he contradicts this assertion in terms as earnest and unqualified as those he had employed in its enunciation and repetition. “Gen. Washington was true to the republican charge confided to him; and has solemnly and repeatedly protested to me, in our conversations, that he would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it; and he did this the oftener and with the more earnestness, because he knew my sus-

pitions of Hamilton's designs against it, and wished to quiet them. *For he was not aware of the drift, or of the effect of Hamilton's schemes.*" From this pointed contradiction it is evident, that whoever believes Mr. Jefferson's accusations against Hamilton, and confides in his claims to the credit of having detected and defeated them, by bringing about "the revolution of 1800," (Vol. IV. p. 316,) must believe in a story which Mr. Jefferson himself has declared to be false, and must yield to pretensions which he has proved to be preposterous.

However, as if to complete this formidable array of proof against the political integrity of his slaughtered colleague, he avers (Vol. IV. p. 446) that Hamilton "avowed the opinion that man could be governed by one of two motives only, force or interest." It appears to me, I must confess, that, felonious as this opinion may be in the eyes of "*a real Jeffersonian*," it is impossible that a man of Gen. Hamilton's clear understanding could have held any other. Arbitrary governments are founded on force, either actual or potential, in the governors; free governments rest on the interest, real or supposed, of the governed. There is no other possible foundation for a free government than interest. It was because Gen. Washington and his colleagues of the convention, thought our present government would secure and promote the interest of the nation, that they framed and recommended it, and for no other reason; and it was because a majority of the people of the United States came to the same conclusion, that they adopted it. And it is not only matter of certainty but of satisfaction, that should a majority of the people be convinced by experience that it fails to answer the great end of its formation, they will set to work and change it, so as to bring it into a form better calculated to promote their interest. Why is it one of our favourite political maxims that education and representation should be co-extensive? It is that by the first, the people will be taught to understand their true interest, and by the second, be enabled to secure it. Yet this liberal, sound and obvious opinion, is made the ground of a dark and disgraceful charge, of endless sneers and ceaseless accusations against the memory of Alexander Hamilton—a man whose steps from boyhood to the grave were those of patriotism and honour.

But another attempt equally formidable against the memory of Hamilton is found in a memorandum, which, it is difficult to conceive, that an honourable man would listen to, much less record. (Vol. IV. pp. 511-12.) "January 24th, 1800, Mr. Smith, a merchant from Hamburg, gives me the following information. The St. Andrew's Club of New York, (all Scotch tories,) gave a public dinner lately. Among other guests Alexander Hamilton was one. After dinner, the first toast was, "the President of the United States." It was drank without any particular approbation. The next was, "George the Third." Hamilton stood up on his feet, and insisted on a bumper and three cheers. The whole company

rose and gave the cheers. One of them, though a federalist, was so disgusted at the partiality shown by Hamilton to a foreign sovereign over his own President, that he mentioned it to a Mr. Schwartshouse, an American merchant at New York, who mentioned it to Smith."

The vagueness and extent of transmission contrived for this story gives it all the dignity of fable. The sceptre of Agamemnon was not handed down through so many personages, or derived from so doubtful an original. A person without a name mentions it to Mr. Schwartshouse, who tells it to Mr. *Smith*, considered every where the proxy of Mr. *Nobody*, who in his turn mentions it to Mr. Jefferson; and he, the bitterest enemy Hamilton ever had, prepares it for the public!

If the least foundation can be imagined for this shadow of a shade of a phantom of a fiction, you will perceive it can signify nothing else than, that as the Scotch entertainers paid a compliment to Gen. Hamilton's known national feelings by toasting the President of the United States, he returned it by toasting the health of their King. And that in the regular progression of drinking, the second toast was attended by more animation or less formality than the first; an animation in which the whole company are said to have participated.

In the midst of this silly falsification one truth stands conspicuous. It is, that while this splendid genius and generous patriot, Alexander Hamilton, was retrieving by brilliant forensic exertions, for the good of his family, the time he had devoted to his country, he was waylaid in his hours of refreshment and moments of festivity by the unrelenting hatred of his rival; and could not even wet his lips with wine, or relax his strong intelligence in society, without having poison dropped by Mr. Jefferson into the flowing bowl, and mixed with the sustaining viands. Was ever such a state of things exhibited before in civilized society? The Duke of Marlborough was hated by Bolingbroke; the great Lord Chatham by the first Lord Holland; and the sons of these political foes were steady political rivals. But these men never descended to invent or collect silly personal slanders, that by keeping them bottled up for a quarter of a century they might acquire a certain strength of mischief. The finest encomium ever passed on Marlborough was by his generous enemy; and the highest compliment ever bestowed on the memory of Pitt, was pronounced by Fox; who, if he ever excelled his rival, did so by doing justice to his virtues.

Upon close examination of this story, another and not less interesting truth may be discovered. It appears that when Hamilton rose and proposed three cheers to the health of George the Third, "the whole company also rose and gave the cheers," and that nevertheless one of the company was so disgusted at Hamilton's manner of drinking the toast, that he mentioned it as evidence of his shameful partiality for "a foreign sovereign over his own Presi-

dent." Now Hamilton's manner of drinking the toast "George the Third," was precisely that in which this very person is made to declare that he himself drank it—that is, with "three cheers." In order to go along with Mr. Jefferson then, we must believe not only that this person, "a federalist," was disgusted with Gen. Hamilton, but that he was disgusted with himself on the occasion, and further, that he not only reprobated Gen. Hamilton, but reproached himself to Mr. Schwartshouse, with having shewn a disgusting partiality for a foreign sovereign. Unless we admit that human nature deviated from its regular course in this individual, we must refuse to believe that he said any thing about disgust in regard to Hamilton, and we must conclude that he simply mentioned the facts of having dined with that distinguished man at the St. Andrew's Club, and that the health of the King of England was drunk with marks of general hilarity. If there were any probability that this circumstance of disgust was interwoven either by Mr. Schwartshouse or Mr. Smith, it would be excluded by the assertion of Mr. Jefferson to the contrary. It is certain then that it was added by Mr. Jefferson himself, who, hearing an innocent anecdote from Mr. Smith, "at a later date" attached to it this circumstance with a view of completing the tissue of slander which he was fabricating for the destruction of a rival's fame. In this light, the anecdote is not only perfectly natural but infinitely valuable. For while it comes "within the laws of Mr. Jefferson's character," it shews to the world the manner in which he really employed those hours that were supposed to be sacred to (Vol. I. p. 8) "learning, philosophic inspiration, and generous devotion to virtue."

As Gen. Lee was allied to Gen. Hamilton by the warmest friendship, by kindred talents, and congenial patriotism, exemption from similar vilification, though desirable to his friends, could not have been creditable to his reputation.\*

[\* Mr. Tucker, who does much justice to the memory of Hamilton, saying truly, that "he did more than any other individual in recommending the constitution to the adoption of the people," and that "his frankness, generosity, and manly independence were such as to command the respect of his adversaries, as well as the unbounded attachment of his friends," (Vol. I. p. 496-7,) yet says decidedly that his "predilections for a monarchical government were well known," (p. 312.) Supposing this to be true, yet "predilections" are not "designs," and it is of hostile designs against our institutions of which Mr. Jefferson accuses him; and we have the very authority to which Mr. Tucker refers, to prove Gen. Hamilton's monarchical predilections, to shew that he "heartily assented to the constitution," that he "was of that kind of men, who may most safely be trusted, for he was more covetous of glory than of wealth or power," and that he had that "love for the people," which his opponents only affected. Indeed, when we consider attentively, and in its proper light, this testimony of Gouverneur Morris, which Mr. Tucker relies on so confidently, it will be found not to be exactly what he imagines it. His letter to Mr. Walsh (Spark's Life, Vol. III. p. 260,) must rather be regarded as an essay than a piece of evidence. For in simply testifying to a fact it is difficult to suppose that he would draw such nice distinctions as are involved in his asser-

## LETTER XV.

AMONG the great officers to whom the people of the United States are indebted for the success of their Revolution, and of their present

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tion, that Hamilton “*heartily assented to the constitution,*” and yet that “he *disliked it;*” and that he “*hated republican government, because* he confounded it with *democratical government.*” For though a discriminating essayist may regard the Latin origin of the word *republic* as making it express more properly a government like that of Rome, (which we should rather consider an aristocracy,) while the Greek derivation of democracy makes it more appropriately describe the commonwealths of Greece, (which were certainly much less democratic than those of New England in our sense of that term,) yet the common parlance in which witnesses should speak makes no such nice distinctions. But this letter does bear distinct testimony to Hamilton’s detestation of despotism, and love for liberty and honour. For it says he detested democratical government “because he believed it must end in despotism, and be, in the mean time, destructive to public morality;” and that “he was too proud, and, let me add, too virtuous to recommend or tolerate measures eventually fatal to liberty and honour.”

These apparent inconsistencies, then, in Mr. Morris’s letter, may be explained by referring to the different views of Hamilton and himself, evinced when the constitution was formed, and, as it would seem, entertained ever after. It was then agreed on all hands, that democracy was to be the basis of the new government, and the only question was, to what extent and in what proportions the elements of the other two forms, monarchy and aristocracy, should be mingled with it. Mr. Morris advocated a strong infusion of aristocracy as the best corrective of those evils which are supposed to beset popular government; (see Yeates’s Report, &c. p. 201;) while Mr. Hamilton argued (p. 170-1,) that “those who mean to form *a solid republican government* ought to proceed to the *confines* of another government,” and thought that other ought to be a monarchy; and contended that, “as long as offices are open to all men, and no constitutional rank is established, it is *pure republicanism*—but if we incline too much to democracy, we shall shoot into monarchy.”

Mr. Madison inclined to the aristocratical infusion—saying (p. 170,) the minority of the opulent should be protected against the majority—“That the senate ought to be this body; and to answer these purposes, ought to have permanency and stability. Various have been the propositions, but my opinion is, *the longer they continue in office the better.*” While “Mr. Gerry (according to Judge Yeates, p. 118,) could not be governed by the prejudices of the people—Their good sense will ever have its weight. Perhaps a limited monarchy would be the best government, if we could organize it by creating a house of peers; but that cannot be done.” And again, (p. 188,) “Aristocracy is the worst kind of government, and I would sooner submit to a monarchy.”

Thus it seems that this subsequent burning and shining light of democracy, who rasped down traitors by the herd, was for following Mr. Hamilton, at least to the confines of monarchy.

Mr. Morris says in his letter to Mr. Walsh—“One marked trait of the General’s (Hamilton’s) character was the pertinacious adherence to opinions he had once formed.” Therefore the “favourite form” which Mr. Morris said (letter to Aaron Ogden, Vol. III. p. 216—also referred to by Mr. Tucker,) is

form of government, none were more faithful, and few were more useful, friends of their country, than Gen. KNOX.

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"he knew was inadmissible,"—the "hobby he bestrode to the great annoyance of his friends, and not without injury to himself," was probably nothing more than the system of government he presented to the convention for their consideration. Mr. Hamilton contended that that was republican—said distinctly that he "*would wish to go the full length of republican principles,*" (p. 136,) and that whatever might be his opinions about government in the abstract, he thought "it would be *unwise* to change that form (the republican) of government." He confessed in concluding his manly speech, that his plan and the Virginia plan (and of this Mr. Madison was a strenuous advocate,) were both "very remote from the idea of the people," but said that their notions on the subject of government were gradually ripening—that "they had begun to be tired of *an excess of democracy*—and what even is the Virginia plan *but pork still with a little change of the sauce?*" that is, that in its nature it was as monarchical as his own. Mr. Jefferson says in his *Anas*, (p. 506,) that Hamilton said of the government we adopted—"Oh! say the *federal monarchy*, let us call things by their right names, for a monarchy it is." And Mr. Jefferson himself said of it in a letter to Mr. Adams, (Tucker's Life, Vol. I. p. 253,) "The house of federal representatives will not be adequate to the management of affairs, either foreign or federal. *Their president seems to be a bad edition of a Polish king.* He may be elected from four years to four years for life. *Reason and experience prove to us that a chief magistrate so continuable is an office for life.*" And to Col. Smith he says, (same page) "what we have always read of Polish kings, would have forever excluded the idea of one continuable for life." Thus it would appear that Mr. Jefferson considered our government a bad edition of the Polish monarchy; and his letter to Mr. Adams will be found to sustain the reasoning of Mr. Hamilton on the same subject. For Mr. Morris truly described his views in the letter to Mr. Walsh where he says—He (Mr. Hamilton) was not, as "some have supposed, so blind as not to see, that the president could purchase power, and shelter himself from responsibility, by sacrificing the rights and duties of his office at the shrine of influence. But he was too proud, and, let me add, too virtuous, to recommend or tolerate measures eventually fatal to liberty and honour. It was not, then, because he thought the executive magistrate too feeble to carry on the business of the state, that he wished him to possess more authority, but because he thought there was not sufficient power to carry on the business honestly. He apprehended a corrupt understanding between the executive and a dominating party in the legislature, which would destroy the president's responsibility; and he was not to be taught, what every one knows, that where responsibility ends, fraud, injustice, tyranny and treachery begin."

This account of Mr. Hamilton's views, given in 1811, agrees entirely with his main speech in the convention; and he said on another occasion in that body—"Establish a weak government, and you must, at times, overleap the bounds. Rome was obliged to create dictators." (Yeates, p. 142.) According to Mr. Jefferson's account of his own conduct he experienced this necessity when he purchased Louisiana; and we have the same authority (Vol. IV. p. 453,) that in 1791, Mr. Hamilton thought the success of our experiment in government appeared more possible than it had done before, and said "there are other and other stages of improvement which, if the present does not succeed, may be tried, and ought to be tried, before we give up the republican form altogether; *for that mind must be really depraved which would not prefer the equality of political rights, which is the foundation of pure republicanism, if it can be obtained consistently with order.* Therefore whoever by his writings disturbs the present order of things, is really blameable, however pure his intentions may be."

Mr. Tucker admits (Vol. I. p. 366,) that Mr. Jefferson's difference of opi-

In the war of the Revolution, having commenced his military career as a volunteer at the Battle of Bunker's Hill, he fought his way to the rank of Major General. He commanded in chief the Artillery, and serving for the most part under the eye of Washington, engaged in a remarkable degree his official confidence and personal friendship. Upon the resignation of Gen. Lincoln as Secretary of War, the acknowledged capacity and valuable experience of Gen. Knox, induced the Congress to appoint him to that important station. In this situation he was found by President Washington when he assumed the direction of the new government, and his judgment and regard were both satisfied by the consent of Gen. Knox to continue in it. Though he did not possess profound erudition or rare acquirements, his qualifications were of much higher value. He was a man of sound judgment, honourable principles, useful knowledge, and perfect candour. The visionary projects or interested schemes of more ingenuous minds, were shivered and dissipated by contact with the manly patriotism and strong sense of Gen. Knox. Hence it appears, that in the Cabinet consultations, of which, Mr. Jefferson's translation only is preserved, Gen. Knox frequently dissented from the speculations of the Secretary of State, and generally coincided in opinion with the minister of finance. This unpardonable and antigallican offence was never forgiven by Mr. Jefferson, and entailed on Gen. Knox the foulest vituperation, which resentment could suggest to a mind expert in the inventions of slander, and habituated to the secret indulgences of malice.

The following extracts from Mr. Jefferson's Memoranda, revised and corrected after a *prematur* of twenty-five years, afford evidence of the terms which the *Sage of Monticello* thought suitable to the character of Gen. Knox. (Vol. IV. p. 473.) "Knox for once dared to differ from Hamilton, and to express, very submissively, an opinion," &c. (p. 484.) "Knox subscribed at once to Hamilton's opinion, that we ought to declare the treaty void, acknowledging at the same time, like a fool as he is, that he knew nothing about it." Again—after observing that he himself, Hamilton, and Randolph, submitted their opinions in writing to the President on a certain

nion with Mr. Hamilton "amounted to personal distrust and ill-will." Therefore his testimony in favour of Col. Hamilton, especially in relation to his political principles must be regarded as the strongest possible. Add to all this the paramount weight of Gen. Washington's testimony, who being admitted on all hands to have been true to "his republican trust," would not have given his confidence to one whom he could suspect for a moment to be hostile to our institutions, and we shall be enabled to understand to what extent Hamilton's predilections were monarchical, and with what limitations Gouverneur Morris's testimony is to be regarded. Mr. Jefferson calls the latter "a high-flying monarchist," and taking the imputation in the sense here intended, it is probable that Mr. Morris would have acquitted Col. Hamilton of it, as decidedly as he would have repelled it from himself.]

occasion, he adds, "I believe Knox's was never thought worth offering or asking for." (p. 491.) "Knox in a foolish incoherent sort of speech introduced the pasquinade lately printed."—"Knox said we should have had fine work, if Congress had been sitting these last two months. The fool thus let out the secret. Hamilton endeavoured to patch up the indiscretion of this blabber," &c.

Now if you are desirous to ascertain more accurately than I can pretend to explain it, the precise degree of merit which these flowers of Mr. Jefferson's rhetoric signify, it will be necessary that you attend to the following testimonials in regard to the character and services of Gen. Knox. Dr. Thacher in his interesting Journal of the Revolutionary War, thus speaks of him. "Long will he be remembered as the ornament of every circle in which he moved, as the amiable and enlightened companion, the generous friend, the man of feeling and benevolence;—his conversation was animated and cheerful, and he imparted an interest to every subject that he touched. In his gayest moments he never lost sight of dignity;—he invited confidence, but repelled familiarity. His imagination was brilliant, his conceptions lofty; and no man ever possessed the power of embodying his thoughts in more vigorous language; when ardently engaged they were peculiarly bold and original, and you irresistibly felt in his society, that his intellect was not of the ordinary class. Yet no man was more unassuming, none more delicately alive to the feelings of others. He had the peculiar talent of rendering all who were with him, happy in themselves; and no one ever more feelingly enjoyed the happiness of those around him." "To the testimony of private friendship, may be added that of less partial strangers, who have borne witness, both to his public and private virtues. Lord Moira, who is now perhaps the greatest general that England can boast of, has in a late publication spoken in high terms of his military talents. Nor should the opinion of the Marquis Chastellux be omitted. "As for Gen. Knox," he says, "to praise him for his military talents alone, would be to deprive him of half the eulogium he merits, a man of understanding, well informed, gay, sincere, and honest—it is impossible to know without esteeming him, or to see without loving him,—thus have the English without intention, added to the ornaments of the human species by awakening talents where they least wished or expected." (pp. 589, 590.) To this may be added the following extracts of Letters from Gen. Washington to Gen. Knox—the first written when he retired from the direction of the War Department, and the second when Washington himself was about to lay down the office of President.—"I cannot suffer you, however, to close your public service without uniting to the satisfaction which must arise in your own mind from conscious rectitude, assurances of my perfect persuasion that you have deserved well of your country. My personal knowledge of your exertions, while it authorizes me to hold this language, justifies the sincere friendship which I have borne you, and which

will accompany you in every station in life.”\* “Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love. Among them, be assured, you are one.”† This is the man, who, admired by distinguished foreigners and unpretending fellow-citizens, tried in the judgment, and stamped by the affection of Washington; who for twenty years, without interruption or abatement, was high in the military and civil trust of the United States, is handed down to posterity by Mr. Jefferson, as a *parasite*, a *fool*, and a *blabber*.

About four years after his resignation as Secretary of War, Gen. Knox, who had, too long for the advantage of his own affairs, attended to those of his country, experienced the misfortune to become insolvent, and to find himself in the decline of life, reduced to poverty. This calamity, so far from exciting the commiseration of his former colleague, Mr. Jefferson, is related by him to Mr. Madison in the following heartless language, (Vol. III. p. 406) “Gen. Knox has become bankrupt for four hundred thousand dollars and has resigned his military commission. He took in Gen. Lincoln for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which breaks him. Col. Jackson also sunk with him.” So that in 1799, Mr. Jefferson thought if a man suffered a pecuniary loss as surety or creditor of his friend, he might be said to have been *taken in* by that friend—

“Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futuræ.”

However, after this “fool, blabber, and bankrupt,” was dead, the wise, philosophic, and diplomatic Mr. Jefferson found it convenient to embrace an opportunity of defrauding his memory of credit, in order to transfer the spoil to his own modest account. As this is one of the most cruel instances of the dupery he practised on the waning age and waxing vanity of Mr. Adams, it is not unworthy of particular notice.

It seems that early in January, 1811, Dr. Rush had expressed an interest in bringing about a restoration of correspondence between these ex-Presidents. His intimation to that effect, drew on the 16th of the same month a favourable reply from Mr. Jefferson, who hearing nothing more from Dr. Rush, or nothing conclusive, at least, on the subject, volunteered a fresh communication in furtherance of it, on the 5th of the following December. In this communication he informs Dr. Rush that two of his neighbours had visited Mr. Adams in the course of the previous summer; that they found him free in the abuse of his Ministers of State, saying they acted above his control and often against his opinions; called them his *masters*; and after reprobating the licentiousness of the press to which Mr.

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 615.

† Ibid. Vol. V. p. 34, Notes.

Jefferson had been exposed, added—"I always loved Jefferson and still love him." This Mr. Jefferson assures Dr. Rush "is enough for him;" and he gives the Doctor full powers to conclude a treaty, not only of peace and amity, but of fraternity and partition. Mr. Adams soon after sends him a few samples of homespun cloth, and Mr. Jefferson thereupon fires a salute of reciprocating compliments.

This reconciliation between two aged statesmen, who had both filled the highest offices in the Union, and had been rivals in the race for power, has in it at first sight, something very commendable and pleasing. But it turns out to be a friendship established upon the basis of that struck up between Anthony and Augustus, when they buried their mutual animosity in the common destruction of their friends; with this difference, that of the American Duumviri, all the sacrifices were made by Mr. Adams. As a preliminary, he resigned his ministers to execration and himself to contempt. For this sacrifice, instead of a hecatomb of democrats, Mr. Jefferson assigns him a province of flattery, a tempting bait to a man of immoderate egotism, though a cheap equivalent for one of infinite assertion. In his first letter he persuades Mr. Adams to write to him, in order that—"I should have the pleasure of knowing, that in the race of life, you do not keep in its physical decline the same distance ahead of me, which you have done in political honours and achievements." At this rate the correspondence jogs along, to judge from Mr. Jefferson's Letters, cheerfully enough, until the 29th of May, 1813. Then, it seems, Mr. Adams requested explanations of two letters written by Mr. Jefferson to some third person, which had been referred to by a hostile pamphleteer, in support of strictures on Mr. Adams's public character and political sentiments. In answer, Mr. Jefferson, after extenuating the censure of these letters, endeavours to show that it was not aimed at Mr. Adams but at the federalists generally—observing, "You happen indeed to be quoted, because you happen to express more pithily than had been done by themselves one of the mottoes of the party." He then proceeds in a strain of deception that shows the confidence with which he practised on the feeble senility of Mr. Adams, and which for shallow and extravagant absurdity, I think you will agree, has scarcely its parallel in his own "Writings."

The occasion to which these obnoxious letters of Mr. Jefferson referred, was this. Mr. Adams, when President, had received an address from a club of young men in Philadelphia, in which the fantastic people of France, and their fantastic notions of the infinite perfectibility of the human mind, were vehemently lauded, as outshining the wisdom of the past, and exploding the value of experience. In answering this important paper, he had ventured to doubt this doctrine of perfection, and even to express becoming respect for the lessons of experience, and had gone so far, it would appear, as to question whether minds of "stronger penetration" and wider range than those of the Jeffersonian "trinity," Bacon, Newton, and

Locke, were likely to appear on the stage of the world. This answer, which might possibly have been a frosty reproof of the pullulating philosophers of Philadelphia, Mr. Jefferson attacked, not openly and fairly, but, as was his wont, *secretly* and *circuitously*, in order to expose Mr. Adams, with whom he was competing for the next Presidency, as an "*Anglo-man*," a "monocrat," and an enemy to the progress of mental improvement. And this attack he endeavours to explain.

After observing that one of his letters was on the subject of religion, and was likely to provoke the priesthood against him, he proceeds to expound the other. (Vol. IV. pp. 194, 195.) "The readers of my letter should be cautioned not to confine its view to this country alone. England and its alarmists were equally under consideration. Still less must they consider it as looking personally to you. You happen indeed to be quoted, because you happened to express more pithily than had been done by themselves, one of the mottoes of the party. This was in your answer to the address of the young men of Philadelphia. (See Selection of Patriotic Addresses, p. 198.) One of the questions, you know, on which our parties took different sides, was on the improvability of the human mind, in science, in ethics, in government, &c. Those who advocated reformation of institutions, *pari passu* with the progress of science, maintained that no definite limits could be assigned to that progress. The enemies of reform, on the other hand, denied improvement, and advocated steady adherence to the principles, practices, and institutions of our fathers, which they represented as the consummation of wisdom, and acmé of excellence, beyond which, the human mind could never advance. Although in the passage of your answer alluded to, you expressly disclaim the wish to influence the freedom of inquiry, you predict that will produce nothing more worthy of transmission to posterity, than the principles, institutions, and systems of education received from their ancestors. I do not consider this your deliberate opinion. You possess yourself too much science, not to see how much is still ahead of you, unexplained and unexplored. Your own consciousness must place you as far before our ancestors, as in the rear of our posterity. I consider it as an expression lent to the prejudices of your friends; and although I happened to cite it from you, the whole letter shews I had them only in view. In truth, my dear Sir, we were far from considering you as the author of all the measures we blamed. They were placed under the protection of your name, but we were satisfied they wanted much of your approbation. We ascribed them to their real authors, the Pickerings, the Wolcotts, the Tracys, the Sedgwicks, *et id genus omne*, with whom we supposed you in a state of duresse. I well remember a conversation with you in the morning of the day on which you nominated to the Senate a substitute for Pickering, in which you expressed a just impatience under the legacy of Secretaries which Gen. Washington

had left you; and whom you seemed therefore, to consider under public protection. Many other incidents shewed how differently you would have acted with less impassioned advisers, and subsequent events have proved that your minds were not together. You would do me great injustice, therefore, by taking to yourself, what was intended for men, who were then your secret, as they are now your open enemies. Should you write on the subject, as you propose, I am sure we shall see you place yourself further from them than from us. As to myself, I shall take no part in any discussions: I leave others to judge of what I have done, and to give me exactly that place, which they shall think I have occupied. Marshall has written libels on one side."

Poor old Mr. Adams, after having been flattered into a forgetfulness of aches and injuries, or rather into a belief that they were the phantoms of his own suspicions, comes across evidences of their reality so impressive, that his languid sensibility is awakened, and he asks how they are to be reconciled to the uniform affection and respect, which Mr. Jefferson professes to have entertained for him. Straightway he is taken hold of, and hurried round a circle of compliments, inconsistencies, and falsehoods, with such smooth rapidity of assurance, as to render him even more giddy and imbecile, than he was before the offensive discovery had roused him; and he is then conducted to his elbow-chair, with a caricature of Pickering, and a calumny of Marshall, to amuse his weakness, and employ his garrulity.

This explanation is chiefly to be admired for the boldness with which its fictions and absurdities are "played off," on the enfeebled mind of Mr. Adams. For, notwithstanding Mr. Jefferson's own infatuation, from the long practice of saying whatever he pleased, and having whatever he pleased to say generally believed, he must have been aware that no man, in possession of common sense, could fail to see through the imposition he was attempting; and it is therefore surprising that this letter should have been left for publication.

He assures Mr. Adams, that notwithstanding the obnoxious remarks in the letter he had alluded to, were applied to certain illiberal and preposterous sentiments in his answer to the Philadelphia address, they were not intended for him in the least, and were in fact occasioned altogether by an unaccountable succession of *accidents*. I *happened* to quote you, but you *happened* to express more pithily than any body else, a motto of the party, and thereupon, I *happened* to "cite" your expression. So that although Mr. Adams was the acknowledged leader, (or, as Mr. Jefferson calls him, (Vol. III. p. 376) "their oracle,"\*) of the federal party, and had

\* To prevent cavilling as to the meaning of this phrase, "their oracle," it may be as well to observe that although the word "oracle" is elsewhere used by Mr. Jefferson in a different sense, it can only mean here, that he considered

expressed their sentiments more pithily, than any other member of the party could; and although Mr. Jefferson, his political rival, and the leader of the opposite party, "cited," and reprobated this pithy expression, and the sentiments of which it was the vehicle, it would be doing him the greatest injustice possible, to suppose that he had the least allusion to Mr. Adams; and would be very unfair, not to feel convinced that his censures were intended, first for the enemies of Mr. Adams, and next for the alarmists of England! Now it seems to me, that if he had put half a dozen small shot in old Mr. Adams, instead of putting this score of slanders upon him, it would have been full as fair an excuse to say that it was an entire accident, that he *happened* to cock his piece, *happened* to take aim at him, and *happened* to fire, but that every body must have known from his heavy load, and long gun, that he was taking a raking shot at a majority of the people in New England, and the alarmists in Old England! This explanation you must allow, surpasses his contending versions of the famous letter to Mazzei.

But as if perceiving that the idea of the *heavy load* would not allay the smart of Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson proceeds to soothe him with an unction of flattery. He is assured that he must in all reason, feel conscious of being advanced far ahead of all men who had lived before him, not excepting Bacon, Newton, and Locke—who were all dead before Mr. Adams was born. So that Hamilton ought to have said that Mr. Adams was "the greatest man that ever lived"—unless he excepted the sage of Monticello, who would thus have been placed at one and the same time, above both his rivals and his "trinity."

Yet notwithstanding this scientific supereminence of Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson tells him, he was so much of a simpleton, that he mistook his enemies for his friends, and submitting to *duresse*, fathered a brood of measures, which his Cabinet hatched, but he neither begot nor approved.

There are however two passages in this letter to Mr. Adams which deserves more serious attention, because they do *happen* to let out a glimmering of truth. One is that in which Mr. Jefferson declares that the difference between his party and the federalists consisted in the policy of the latter being to abide by the institutions we had established and then possessed, while that of the former was

Mr. Adams the leader of the federal party. He says he was "their oracle," as we are told in the history of the Greeks, that the oracle at Delphos was "their oracle," that is, that they were in the habit of consulting and being directed by the responses of that oracle. At page 388, of the same volume, Mr. Jefferson, speaking of Mr. Adams, says that Mr. Goodhue was "his oracle," or mouthpiece, as the Greeks, when speaking of Apollo, said that the same oracle at Delphos, was "his oracle," or mouthpiece. So that a fair interpretation of both these phrases, proves that Mr. Jefferson really considered Mr. Adams, the *Magnus Apollo* of the federal party.

"a reformation of our institutions, *pari passu* with the progress of science." Now if we take this to be the true state of the contest, the true principle of difference between the parties, we have to inquire what becomes of the "revolution of 1800," the successful conduct of which made Mr. Jefferson a political demi-god, or at least a saint in the republican calendar? That has always been proclaimed by its leader and his abettors to have been a reformation in the action of the government, not in its principles—a *restoration* or *bringing back* of the policy of the government to a genuine conformity with our institutions, from which, under the guidance of Hamilton's "cunning," Mr. Jefferson throughout asserts it was deviating into monarchy. For example:—To James Sullivan Mr. Jefferson says, in a letter written about three weeks before Gen. Washington's last presidential term expired, deprecating his "preponderant popularity, (Vol. III. p. 350,) "That influence once withdrawn, and our countrymen left to the operation of their own enlightened good sense, I have no doubt we shall see a pretty rapid return of general harmony, and our citizens moving in phalanx in the paths of regular liberty, order, and a sacrosanct adherence to the constitution." To Mr. Van Buren, at a much later period, he says, (Vol. IV. p. 407,) "It is vain then for Mr. Pickering and his friends to endeavour to falsify Gen. Washington's character, by representing him as the enemy to republicans and republican principles, and as exclusively the friend of those who were so; and had he lived longer, he would have returned to his ancient unbiassed opinions, would have replaced his confidence in those whom the people approved and supported, and would have seen that they were only *restoring*, and acting on, the principles of his own first administration." Here, not to notice the obvious absurdity of saying that Gen. Washington never departed from a point to which it is averred he would have returned, and that he would have replaced a confidence which he had never withdrawn, it is to be observed that the principles of his first administration are referred to as those of the constitution, or in the sanctimonious language of the preceding citation, "a sacrosanct adherence to the constitution."

But if this is not sufficient to shew that the avowed object and vaunted effect of "the revolution of 1800," was not "a reformation of our institutions," but a restoration of the conduct of the government to the letter and spirit of our institutions, let us refer to Mr. Jefferson's account of it in his formal statement of the services, upon which he builds his claim to the privilege of selling his land to his fellow-citizens for more than it was worth. (Vol. IV. pp. 434–5.) "If it were thought worth while to specify any particular services rendered, I would refer to the specification of them made by the legislature itself in their farewell address on my retiring from the presidency, February 1809.\* There is one however, not

\* The value of this has been already indicated. See Letter XI.

therein specified, the most important in its consequences, of any transaction in any portion of my life; to wit, the head I personally made against the federal principles and proceedings during the administration of Mr. Adams. Their usurpations and violations of the constitution at that period, and their majority in both houses of Congress, were so great, so decided, and so daring, that after combating their aggressions inch by inch, without being able in the least to check their career, the republican leaders thought it would be best for them to give up their useless efforts there, go home, get into their respective legislatures, embody whatever of resistance they could be formed into, and, if ineffectual, to perish there as in the last ditch. All therefore, retired, leaving Mr. Gallatin alone in the House of Representatives, and myself in the Senate, where I then presided as Vice-President. Remaining at our posts, and bidding defiance to the brow-beating and insults by which they endeavoured to drive us off also, we kept the mass of republicans in phalanx together, until the legislatures could be brought up to the charge; and nothing on earth is more certain, than that if myself particularly, placed by my office as Vice-President at the head of the republicans, had given way and withdrawn from my post, the republicans throughout the Union would have given up in despair, and the cause would have been lost for ever. By holding on we obtained time for the legislatures to come up with their weight; and those of Virginia and Kentucky particularly, but more especially the former, by their celebrated resolutions\* saved the constitution at its last gasp. No person who was not a witness of the scenes of that gloomy period, can form any idea of the afflicting persecutions and personal indignities we had to brook. They saved our country however."

From this extract it is evident, that if Mr. Jefferson's explanation to Mr. Adams, in which explanation he describes his party as "the advocates of a reformation of institutions *pari passu* with the progress of science," is to be believed, it must be admitted that this appeal to the favour of the Virginia legislature was "bottomed on corruption" and falsehood. In this he claims credit for "making head personally" against "the usurpations and violations of the constitution" perpetrated by the federal party, and describes himself as "placed at the head of the republican party, by his office of Vice-President." By the same token, Mr. Adams being President, was placed at the head of the federal party; so that while Mr. Jefferson is in one breath appealing to the legislature of Virginia, for a pecuniary recompense for his personal exertions in defending the constitution against change or violation, he confesses to Mr. Adams that he never made these exertions, but was on the contrary

\* This is modest, considering that Mr. Jefferson was himself the author of the Kentucky resolutions; that fountain of nullification which is now pouring its bitter waters over Carolina.

endeavouring himself to bring about a change in the constitution, against the "brow-beating" federalists who opposed all his attempts at innovation.

He declares in his reasons for asking for this pecuniary gratification, that by being so patriotic as *not* to resign his place as Vice-President, in submission to the intimidating efforts of the federalists to make him retreat as he did before Arnold and Tarleton, and to resign as he did under the charges of Mr. Nicholas, "the constitution was saved at its last gasp;" that is, saved from the "usurpations and violations," or changes, attempted by the federalists. But Mr. Adams is assured that this is entirely false, and that at this very time the dearest object of Mr. Jefferson, and the party at the head of which he was placed as Vice-President, was to effect a progressive and unlimited reformation in our institutions, avowing that they not only "advocated a reformation of institutions," *pari passu* with the progress of science, but maintained that no definite limits could be assigned to that progress." As these stories eat up each other as completely as the Kilkenny cats are said to have done, *tail and all*, it is unnecessary to dwell on them. But by way of shewing as a piece of natural history, that the father of both felt greater paternal tenderness for the mercenary and more malignant one, I refer to his letter giving an account of his authorship of the nullifying Kentucky resolutions.

In that letter (Vol. IV. p. 344,) he tells Mr. Nicholas, the son, that he prepared those resolutions during the period in which as Vice-President he was making head against the federalists and defending the constitution from all change; and that Mr. Nicholas, the father, "proposed and carried them through" the legislature of Kentucky. He then adds—"I fear, dear sir, we are now" (the letter is dated December, 1821,) "in such another crisis, with this difference only, that the judiciary branch is alone and single-handed in the present assaults on the constitution. But its assaults are more sure and deadly, as from an agent seemingly passive and unassuming. May you and your contemporaries meet them with the same determination and effect, as your father and his did, the alien and sedition laws, and preserve *inviolate* a constitution, which, cherished in all its chastity and purity, will prove in the end a blessing to all the nations of the earth."

The other passage in this letter to Mr. Adams is that in which Mr. Jefferson says, "I well remember a conversation with you in the morning of the day on which you nominated to the Senate a substitute for Pickering, in which you expressed a just impatience under "the legacy of Secretaries which Gen. Washington had left you," &c.

It is well known that towards the close of Mr. Adams's administration a rupture took place between him and certain of his leading political friends, and that in consequence of it Mr. Pickering, his Secretary of State, either resigned or was removed from office. It

seems that Mr. Jefferson, although "personally making head" as chief of one party, against Mr. Adams as leader of the other, seized this occasion of conversing with Mr. Adams, and of "sowing tares" between him and his other friends. This attempt had been made at an earlier date, as appears from a letter he wrote to Mr. Adams upon the occasion of his own probable defeat in their first contest for the presidency, (Vol. III. p. 338,) but which was deemed from its friendly professions so "mal apropos" (p. 348,) by Mr. Madison, that he refused to deliver it, and it never reached Mr. Adams's hands. That letter, dated the 28th December, 1796, is filled with expressions of personal and political esteem for Mr. Adams, and after a protestation of Mr. Jefferson's gratification at the ill success of his competition for the presidency, contains this observation:—"It is possible indeed that even you may be cheated of your succession by a trick worthy of the subtlety of your arch-friend from New York, who has been able to make of your real friends, tools for defeating their and your just wishes." This "arch-friend from New York" was the great and glorious Alexander Hamilton, against whom Mr. Jefferson, having failed to excite suspicions in the mind of President Washington, was thus early endeavouring to instil jealousies in the breast of his successor.

However, to return to this letter of explanation to Mr. Adams, it appears that it not only gulled but delighted him; for we find him in a fit of gratitude at a later stage of their revived correspondence actually crowning the gun-boat, dry-dock, and embargo President as the Neptune of the United States, the father of the American navy! This too in a tone of indifference to the memory of Gen. Knox, and that delicacy which was due to his venerable relict and orphan son, which proves but too clearly that Mr. Jefferson's suggestion to Mr. Adams to abandon his former friends—"place himself farther from them than from us"—had produced its intended effect. Now although a pretty extensive paternity has been assigned to Mr. Jefferson, I believe it was never supposed, even in Virginia, where the sun ripens such various complexions, that he was "the father of our Navy"! This is the exclusive discovery of Mr. Adams, and he appears not to have revealed it until his ninety-second year, when the following occasion brought it forth. (Vol. IV. p. 357.)

On the 15th October, 1822, Mr. Adams made a communication to Mr. Jefferson of which this is an extract. "Mrs. Knox, not long since, wrote to Dr. Waterhouse, requesting him to procure a commission for her son in the navy; that navy, says her ladyship, of which his father was the parent. 'For,' says she, 'I have frequently heard Gen. Washington say to my husband, the Navy was your child.' I have always," adds Mr. Adams, "believed it to be Jefferson's child, though Knox may have assisted in bringing it into the world." The trivial and inconsequent remarks by which Mr. Adams proceeds to support this strange attribution—one, that

Hamilton's hobby was the army, and the other, that he "had full proof from Washington's own lips," that he was averse to a navy—need not be discussed, inasmuch as a disposition to cherish one branch of military force, is no proof of aversion to the other, and as it is on record that Gen. Washington from first to last was in favour of creating a naval force, and in his last speech to congress recommended it thus emphatically: "Will it not, then, be advisable to begin without delay to provide and lay up the materials for building ships of war; and to proceed in the work by degrees, in proportion as our revenues shall render it practicable without inconvenience; so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unprotected state in which it was found by the present."\*

Besides, the object in view is only to show how willingly Mr. Jefferson could consent to divide credit with "a fool and blabber," even though conscious that he had no right to a particle of it, and provided he had only a widow and an orphan to contend with. He replies to Mr. Adams on the 1st of November, (p. 355,) "I have racked my memory and ransacked my papers to enable myself to answer the inquiries of your favour of October the 15th, but to little purpose. My papers furnish me nothing, my memory generalities only. I know that while I was in Europe, and anxious about the fate of our seafaring men, for some of whom, then in captivity in Algiers, we were treating, and all were in like danger, I formed undoubtfully the opinion, that our government, as soon as practicable, should provide a naval force sufficient to keep the Barbary States in order, and on this subject we communicated together, as you observe. When I returned to the United States and took part in the administration under Gen. Washington, I constantly maintained that opinion; and in December, 1790, took advantage of a reference to me from the first Congress that met after I was in office, to report in favour of a force sufficient for the protection of our Mediterranean commerce. I think Gen. Washington approved of building vessels of war to that extent. Gen. Knox I know did." He then goes on to reconcile his dry-dock system with this generation of the navy, and daring from the dotage of his correspondent, as Jacob was when engaged in a similar scheme, Mr. Jefferson tells Mr. Adams, that when as his successor to the Presidency, he, Mr. Jefferson, reduced our existing naval force, and even sold some of the frigates, it was in compliance with "an act of Congress passed while you (Mr. Adams) were in office." As if it had not been done by his own party, and in compliance with his own instigations, calumnies, and creed.

In a letter to Mr. Gerry, written at the very time this law for reducing the navy was passed, (January 26th, 1799, Vol. III. p. 409,) Mr. Jefferson thus unbosoms himself. "In confutation then

\* Marshall, Vol. V. p. 715.

of these and all future calumnies, by way of anticipation, I shall make to you a profession of my political faith; in confidence that you will consider every future imputation on me of a contrary complexion, as bearing on its front the mark of falsehood and calumny.” “I am for relying for internal defence, on our militia solely, till actual invasion, and for such a naval force only as may protect our coasts and harbours from such depredations as we have experienced; and not for a standing army in time of peace, which may overawe the public sentiment; nor for a navy, which, by its own expenses and the eternal wars in which it will implicate us, will grind us with public burthens and sink us under them.”

Now here is a solemn confession of political faith, which displays the gun-boat system in its full deformity, and which, unless the Mediterranean sea can be transferred to the coasts and harbours of the United States, abjures from the commencement of the year 1799, through all future time, the propriety of having a naval force, “sufficient for the protection of our Mediterranean commerce.” And although Mr. Jefferson assures Mr. Adams that in December, 1790, he broached, and afterwards “constantly maintained the opinion,” that we ought to have “a force sufficient for the protection of our Mediterranean commerce,” Mr. Gerry was bound under the instructions contained in Mr. Jefferson’s letter to him, to contradict this assurance, upon Mr. Jefferson’s own authority, and to denounce it as an “imputation” against Mr. Jefferson “bearing on its front the mark of falsehood and calumny.”

So much for his “papers,” which he declares though “ransacked, furnish him nothing.” Let us now examine his “memory,” which though “racked,” he protests yielded “generalities only.” On the 16th of January, 1811, it furnished with the readiest confidence to Dr. Rush, through whose instrumentality Mr. Jefferson was angling for the very *coalition* out of which this fraud against Gen. Knox’s memory grew, the following statement:—“When the election between Burr and myself was kept in suspense by the federalists, and they were meditating to place the president of the Senate at the head of the Government, I called on Mr. Adams with a view to have that desperate measure prevented by his negative. He grew warm in an instant, and said with a vehemence he had not used towards me before, “Sir, the event of the election is within your own power. You have only to say you will do justice to the public creditors, maintain the navy, and not disturb those holding offices, and the government will instantly be put into your hands.” These stipulations, Mr. Jefferson says he declined making, when Mr. Adams rejoined, “Then things must take their course.” Now this not only squares with his confession of faith to Mr. Gerry, but shows that both Mr. Adams, who anointed him with this flattery and false appropriation, and he himself while he was receiving the unguent, knew that it was entirely undeserved.

As to Mr. Adams’s part in this shameful and ungenerous pro-

ceeding, it is to be remembered in extenuation, that he was at the time reduced by the weight of years to that grasshopper state in which Homer describes certain statesmen of Troy—and that moreover he does not profess to have “ransacked his papers.”—Mr. Jefferson, on the other hand, was, as he declares, his “junior in life,” about eleven years, and had these letters to Mr. Gerry and Dr. Rush as well as others to the same effect, among the papers and *press copies*, which he declares he “ransacked.” Whatever difficulty he may have experienced at coming at them, there can be none in forming this conclusion, that although Mr. Jefferson profited by denouncing the navy and its advocates, in 1799, he was glad, in 1822, to accept the praise of having fathered and “constantly maintained it.” But at this latter period, he had divided the world of American glory, (taking to himself the lion’s share,) with Mr. Adams, and this important region was not to be left unoccupied. Whatever may be thought of their taunting indifference to the widow and the son of a brave and meritorious colleague, it will be confessed on all hands, that such another father as Mr. Jefferson, is more to be dreaded by our navy than all the fleets of Europe and all the storms of the sea.

Gen. Lee, like Gen. Knóx, was a friend of Gen. Washington, supported his measures, and valued his fame; had, like Gen. Knox, rendered great services, and received little thanks from his country. It is not surprising then that Mr. Jefferson should have been prompted by the same malignity which we find induced him to defraud and to stigmatise the memory of Gen. Knox, to defame and vilify the character of Gen. Lee.\*

[\* It appears from a publication in the National Gazette of January 5th, 1839, that Mr. Humphreys, who, as the builder of the frigate Constitution, is inseparably connected with our naval glory, thought it worth while to record his testimony against the correctness of that letter of Mr. Adams’s, mentioned in the text, which attributes the paternity of the navy to Mr. Jefferson, and hostility to it to Gen. Washington. It was hardly necessary that the skilful hands of the venerable architect of our floating bulwarks should have condescended to the use of so insignificant an instrument as a pen for that purpose; but the document he has left is valuable as showing the zeal with which Washington pushed the creation of the navy, and the justness of his views in regard to it, and which led to its being (as Mr. Humphreys expresses it,) “*a Hercules even in its cradle.*” The spirit with which Gen. Knox acted his part is also manifest, and corroborates his widow’s statement, that her husband was the father of the navy.

The act of Congress, under which our first and noblest frigates were built,—those frigates, which fought the navy into favour—was opposed by all the zeal and ability of the democratic party, and upon grounds which seem now almost incredible. But as no reader will doubt Mr. Tucker’s testimony on this subject, and as it is distinct and short, I will transcribe it from his Life of Jefferson, (Vol. I. p. 478.) “It was resisted, (the bill for a naval force,—consisting of six frigates—to protect our commerce against the Algerines,) not only on the ordinary ground of its unfitness for the attainment of its object, but also because *a navy was said to be contrary to the general policy of the United States*, by involving a ruinous expense; by being incompatible with the discharge of the public debt, and by its exposing us to the hazard of collisions on

## LETTER XVI.

JOHN JAY.

THERE is associated with the name of this upright statesman and enlightened jurist, none of that military glory which belonged to

the ocean with other naval powers, and eventually to war; and lastly, because it would even increase our dependence, by furnishing hostages, as it were, for our good behaviour.”!!

“As a substitute for this mode of defence, it was proposed either to purchase a peace of the Algerines, or to subsidize other nations to afford our commerce protection.”!!

Mr. Tucker admits that Mr. Jefferson concurred with his party on this occasion, and that even “afterwards when war was declared against Great Britain, he was opposed to the erection of a naval force, alleging that it would be only building ships for the British,—but after their unexpected success he seems to have withdrawn his objections, and at least to have acquiesced in the national voice, then loud in its praise.” But it would seem from a subsequent part of Mr. Tucker’s own book, that he never did acquiesce in the national voice on this subject, but continued to the last, to prefer his own piratical system of gunboat and privateer warfare against England. For in December, 1814, in a letter to Mr. Monroe, cited by Mr. Tucker, (Vol. II. p. 358,) he was for encouraging privateers as “a dagger which would strike at the heart of the enemy—their commerce. Frigates and seventy-fours,” he adds, “are a sacrifice we must make, heavy as it is, to the prejudices of a part of our citizens.” Even in the midst of our naval victories—nay, in a letter to Mr. Adams, of May 27, 1813, congratulating him upon them, as the early and constant advocate of wooden walls, he says, that his “epoch for aiming at a navy” will be when the fleets of other powers can be “brought so near to a balance with England that we can turn the scale.”

Mr. Tucker also records a conversation of Mr. Jefferson’s just previous to the capture of the Guerriere, in which he maintained that “in providing a navy we should be only building ships for the British,” (Vol. II. p. 331.) From all this it is difficult to conceive that neither Mr. Jefferson’s memory or papers could, in 1822, furnish him the means of disavowing all claim to the paternity of the navy.

It may be said by Mr. Jefferson’s admirers, that I have, at least, shewn that he was remarkably consistent in his views in regard to the naval policy which the United States ought to pursue; and that therefore we must presume him honest, even if we suppose him mistaken, in them. But there is much to repudiate his claim even to that indulgence, which is usually accorded to honesty, and to shew that his consistency on this subject (certainly remarkable for him) was not the result of conviction, but of hostility to the federalists, which was too fixed and acrimonious in him ever to regard with the least favour a prominent measure of their policy. For the events of the war of the revolution, and the captivity of our mariners in Algiers,—the former painfully impressed upon him while Governor of Virginia, and the latter while he was minister to France,—had deeply convinced him of the utility, nay, the necessity, of a naval force, as his writings of those periods will shew. In his Notes on Virginia, (p. 291-2,) he says, “The sea is the field on which we should meet an European enemy—on that element we should possess some power,”

Washington, Hamilton, Knox, and Lee; and which operating painfully on the memory of Mr. Jefferson, may account in some measure for his dislike and injustice to them.

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which he recommends to amount to *thirty ships, eighteen of the line and twelve frigates*; and his correspondence with our government while its ambassador in France contain similar views, but directed more particularly to the protection of our Mediterranean commerce. How comes it, then, that these views were totally changed the instant his country was about to adopt them, and that he should have advocated the suicidal policy of expending our money to foster the marine of other nations, or of the very pirates from whose prisons our citizens were calling for help? There is but one answer to the question, and that will not establish that the spirit of party was less influential with Mr. Jefferson than the lessons of experience and the dictates of reason; or that he was less intent upon holding a high place in the government than upon seeing his country maintain one among nations. Nor will an opinion in favour of the sincerity of Mr. Jefferson's political professions be aided by an examination of his social conduct. A glaring instance of the want of that first of virtues is to be found in his conduct to his venerable correspondent, Mr. Adams. After Mr. Jefferson's reconciliation with him, his many flatteries and professions of friendship, and especially after his reply to the expostulation of May 29th, 1813, noticed in the text, Mr. Adams had certainly a right to feel assured that Mr. Jefferson would not treasure up any thing to wound his memory, when that should be all of him left upon earth. Yet we find in his friend, correspondent and admirer, Anas, bequeathed to posterity, as materials for history, after "a calm revisal," made so late as 1818, such entries as the following, (p. 503.) "Langdon tells me, that at the second election of President and Vice President of the United States, when there was a considerable vote given to Clinton in opposition to Mr. Adams, he took occasion to remark it in conversation in the Senate Chamber with Mr. Adams, who, gritting his teeth, said, 'Damn 'em, damn 'em, damn 'em, you see that an elective government will not do.' He also tells me that Mr. Adams, in a late conversation, said, 'Republicanism must be disgraced, sir.'"

(P. 508.) "The President (Mr. Adams) has sent a government brig to France, probably to carry despatches. He has chosen as the bearer of these, one Humphreys, the son of a ship carpenter, ignorant, under age, not speaking a word of French, most abusive of that nation; whose only merit is, the having mobbed and beaten Bache on board the frigate built here, for which he was indicted and punished by fine."

The reader will here be reminded of a remark in Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution, in reference to Dr. Price's contemptuous mention of "a few thousands of the dregs of the people." "You will smile here at the consistency of those democrats, who, when they are not on their guard, treat the humbler part of the community with the greatest contempt, whilst, at the same time, they pretend to make them the depositories of all power." In the last extract from the Anas it is evidently mentioned among the reproaches of Mr. Humphreys, that he was the son of a ship carpenter. Yet Mr. Jefferson's classical recollections might have reminded him that from the earliest times such artizans had been highly respected. Among the chiefs of the Iliad was one,

"Who loved by Pallas, Pallas did impart  
To him the shipwright and the builder's art;"

and even that "high-flying monarchist," Gouverneur Morris, treats the feeling which the chief of our democrats manifested towards the origin of Mr. Humphreys, as "among certain prejudices which affect weak minds, and are justly despised by the wiser and better part of mankind. I have met," he continues, (letter to Mrs. Burns, Vol. III. p. 234,) "with mechanics in the first

The mellow radiance of wisdom and virtue, of that *mitis sapientia* which habits of meditation, benevolence, and piety reflect upon the

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societies of Europe, from which idlers of high rank are excluded; and was once introduced by a coppersmith to the intimacy of a Duke."

But to return from this digression, the reader must not suppose that these attacks upon Mr. Adams were accidentally left among the Anas, for Mr. Jefferson assures us to the contrary. In the introduction to them, he says: "Some of the informations I had recorded are now cut out from the rest, because I have seen that they were incorrect, or doubtful, or merely personal or private, with which we have nothing to do." Why then should such gossip as this about Mr. Adams have been preserved? Can it be pretended that it is of such importance as testimony against Marshall's Life of Washington, that the feelings and faith of friendship should have been disregarded to prevent its loss? Supposing the anecdotes to be true, had not Mr. Adams merit enough to entitle a little sally of passion to be forgotten as well as forgiven? And as to his appointment of young Humphreys to the humble office of bearer of despatches, it surely might find a sufficient excuse in the merits of a father who shaped the Herculean infancy of the navy? What then can excuse Mr. Jefferson for such wanton attacks upon the memory of a great man, whom he professed to love, esteem and honour?

Mr. Tucker confesses that Mr. Jefferson has been censured for committing to writing such conversations as form the staple of his Anas, but of course defends him. As a counterpoise to his authority, and better than an answer to his reasoning, I beg leave to refer the reader to a letter from Gouverneur Morris to Col. Pickering, to be found in Vol. III. at page 249, of Sparks' Life of him. Col. Pickering, it seems, wished to obtain for publication a statement of the substance of a conversation which Mr. Jefferson held with Gouverneur Morris, when the contest for the Presidency between Burr and Jefferson was pending in Congress. But Mr. Morris replies, "Still it would, I conceive, be indecorous to bring forward publicly the conversation which Mr. Jefferson held with me, for he certainly could not have intended it for the public; and whatever may have been, or may be, his conduct towards me or my friends, there is, I think, *a sanctity of social intercourse among gentlemen, which ought not to be violated.*"

But Mr. Jefferson has upon this, as upon many other subjects, left us his own condemnation for his own conduct. The sentence he pronounces upon the publication of the Cunningham correspondence is applicable to a large portion of his own Anas. His letter to Mr. Adams of October 12th, 1823, upon that event, as well as what he says of it in the oft-cited one to Mr. Van Buren, expresses strongly enough the general sentiment in relation to this sort of social treachery. "Indignation against the author of this outrage upon private confidence"—"would make it the duty of every honourable mind to disappoint his aim," are words in which Mr. Jefferson fairly and feelingly embodies the verdict of the world upon conduct to which the facts would make it applicable.

If it be not too much presumption, I would suggest to the Professor, whether, instead of weakening the few barriers which, in this tattling and calumnious age, still guard the social board and the domestic fireside from the inquisition of the public press, it would not be better to inculcate the merits of silence? He knows they are not unsung in classic lore.

"Est et fideli tuta silentio  
Merceſ" —

says Horace. Euripides had sung before that "the crown of silence was fair in the eyes of a good man." Simonides has taught that "often does it injure to have spoken, never did it harm any one to have been silent;" and in the beautiful fictions of Arabia, Nourreddin Ali inculcated upon his son "that silence is the ornament and safeguard of life."]

character, encircles the blameless memory of Mr. Jay. As a member of the revolutionary Congress, foreign ambassador, Secretary of State, and Chief Justice of the United States, he rendered important services to his country, and established a claim to the everlasting veneration of his fellow-citizens. The ablest state papers issued by the old Congress, were written by Mr. Jay, and his essays in the *Federalist* are worthy of being there.

Soon after negotiating the famous treaty of 1794 with England, he yielded to a *sincere* love of retirement and study, and having served his country efficiently and faithfully, dedicated himself in modest and noiseless seclusion, to learning, philanthropy, and devotion. The evening of his life was long and quiet, and afforded a perfect contrast to that of Messrs. Adams and Jefferson. He neither belied his enemies, nor betrayed his friends; but practised and promoted that holy and consoling religion, which they seem to have made the subject of sophistical and deriding speculations, dissimilar only in being second hand and shallow, to those with which Milton perplexes the leisure of his impenitent and tormented spirits.

“Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy.”

But the virtues, abilities, services, and repose of Mr. Jay, were no security against the malevolence and detraction of Mr. Jefferson, which were constantly directed against the noblest objects. From the moment the latter had entrenched himself at Monticello, behind a rampart of diplomatic chicanery, philosophical pretensions, and rural resolves, he appears never to have mentioned Mr. Jay without expressions of dislike and crimination. For example—In a letter to Mann Page (Vol. III. p. 315) he says, “Our part of the country is in considerable fermentation, on what they suspect to be a recent roguery of this kind. They say that while all hands were below deck mending sails, splicing ropes, and every one at his own business, and the Captain in his cabin attending to his log-book and chart, a rogue of a pilot has run them into an enemy’s port. But metaphor apart, there is much dissatisfaction with Mr. Jay and his treaty.” To Mr. Madison (p. 316) “Thus it is that Hamilton, Jay, &c. in the boldest act they ever ventured on to undermine the government, have the address to screen themselves and to direct the hue-and-cry against those who wished to drag them into light.” To the same, (p. 324) “The whole mass of your constituents have condemned this work, (Jay’s treaty) in the most unequivocal terms, and are looking to you as their last hope to save them from the effects of the avarice and corruption of the first agent, (Jay,) the revolutionary machinations of others, (Hamilton and his friends, who were endeavouring, Mr. Jefferson declares, to change the Republic into a monarchy,) and the incomprehensible acquiescence of the only honest man (Gen. Washington) who has assented to it. I wish that his honesty and his political errors, may not furnish a

second occasion to exclaim ‘curse on his virtues, they have undone his country.’”

Although these passages have been cited before, they were then introduced to shew either the earnestness of Mr. Jefferson’s efforts to excite opposition to Gen. Washington, while he professed to him to be withdrawn from political discussions altogether, or to prove that while he professed to be his friend he was in secret directly or indirectly calumniating him. As in this instance his “virtues” are said to be of such an execrable sort as to be likely to ruin his country; and he is admitted to be “honest” exactly in the sense in which Anthony repeated “and Brutus is an honourable man.”

In regard to their bearing on Mr. Jay it is needless to multiply these citations, as they express one unvaried tone of malice and slander. But it is astonishing, even in Mr. Jefferson’s “Writings” to find how unmedicable to the influence of time was this defamatory spirit towards Mr. Jay.

It appears that in the year 1823, a quarter of a century at least after Mr. Jay had withdrawn from public affairs, Mr. Adams at a Fourth of July dinner under the freshened recollection of ancient friendships, deviated so far from the articles of coalition which he had entered into with Mr. Jefferson, as, in the drinking the health of Mr. Jay, to observe, that *accident* alone had prevented his name from appearing among the signatures to the declaration of independence. This indiscreet and extra-conventional justice, did not escape the reprehension of Mr. Jefferson. In a letter of the 4th of September, 1823, replying to one from Mr. Adams of the 15th of August, which seems to have contained no reference whatever to Mr. Jay, he thus recalls him with gentle violence from this tendency towards truth. (Vol. IV. p. 379.) “I observe your toast of Mr. Jay, on the 4th of July, wherein you say that the omission of his signature to the declaration of independence was by *accident*. Our impressions as to the fact being different, I shall be glad to have mine corrected if wrong. Jay, you know, had been in constant opposition to our labouring majority. Our estimate at the time was, that he, Dickenson, and Johnson of Maryland, by their ingenuity, perseverance, and partiality for our English connexion, had constantly kept us a year behind where we ought to have been, in our preparations and proceedings.”

The meaning of this evidently is, that Mr. Jay and others, who were like him partial to a renewal of our suspended connexion with England, had retarded the “labouring majority” (in which Mr. Jefferson classes himself with Mr. Adams) a year at least, in the declaration of independence and in preparations to maintain it. The inference attempted is, that it was by *design* and not by *accident*, that he omitted to sign the declaration. Now as to Mr. Jefferson’s labours in this majority, if we except the report on Lord North’s propositions, for which he had previously got credit from the Assembly of Virginia, and his part of the declaration of indepen-

dence, which was subsequent to the season of delay he complains of, his own account of his services gives us one report only, and that solitary labour it appears, was thrown away, for the report was not adopted. (Vol. I. p. 9.) He never appears to have taken part in debate. But this of itself was no proof of his want of zeal in the cause; for although he declares to Mr. Madison (Vol. IV. p. 377) that he was by the *accident* of modesty silent on a particular occasion, and thus insinuates that he participated in the debates on others, it is well known that he was a most indifferent speaker, and at that time could not hope to be heard after such men as John Rutledge, Richard Henry Lee, and John Adams.

But that he had been retarded a year in his wishes and exertions for independence by Mr. Jay or any body else, is a statement which, however bold the assertion may now appear, can be proved to be as false as any other in his "*Writings*." In a letter of the 25th of August, 1775, to John Randolph, who having held an office under the crown in Virginia, and taking no part in the Revolution, had gone to England, Mr. Jefferson, then a member of Congress, says (Vol. I. p. 150)

"Dear Sir,—I am sorry the situation of our country should render it not eligible to you, to remain longer in it. I hope the returning wisdom of Great Britain, will, ere long, put an end to this unnatural contest. There may be people to whose tempers and dispositions, contention is pleasing, and who, therefore, wish a continuance of confusion, but to me it is of all states but one, the most horrid. My first wish is a restoration of our just rights; my second, a return of the happy period, when consistently with duty, I may withdraw myself totally from the public stage, and pass the rest of my days in domestic ease and tranquillity, banishing every desire of ever hearing what passes in the world. Perhaps (for the latter adds considerably to the warmth of the former wish), looking with fondness towards a reconciliation with Great Britain, I cannot help hoping you may be able to contribute towards expediting this good work. I think it must be evident to yourself, that the ministry have been deceived by their officers on this side of the water, who, (for what purpose I cannot tell,) have constantly represented the American opposition as that of a small faction, in which the body of the people took little part. This, you can inform them, of your own knowledge, is untrue. They have taken into their heads, too, that we are cowards, and shall surrender at discretion to an armed force. The past and future operations of the war must confirm or undeceive them on that head. I wish they were thoroughly and minutely acquainted with every circumstance, relative to America, as it exists in truth. I am persuaded, this would go far towards disposing them to reconciliation. Even those in Parliament who are called friends to America, seem to know nothing of our real determinations. I observe, they pronounced in the last Parliament, that the Congress of 1774, did not mean to insist rigor-

ously on the terms they held out, but, kept something in reserve, to give up: and, in fact, that they would give up every thing but the article of taxation. Now, the truth is far from this, as I can affirm, and put my honour to the assertion. Their continuance in this error may, perhaps, produce very ill consequences. The Congress stated the lowest terms they thought possible to be accepted, in order to convince the world they were not unreasonable. They gave up the monopoly and regulation of trade, and all acts of Parliament prior to 1764, leaving to British generosity to render these, at some future time, as easy to America as the interest of Britain would admit. But this was before blood was spilt. I cannot affirm, but have reason to think, these terms would not now be accepted. I wish no false sense of honour, no ignorance of our real intentions, no vain hope that partial concessions of right will be accepted, may induce the ministry to trifle with accommodation, till it shall be out of their power ever to accommodate. If, indeed Great Britain, disjoined from her colonies, be a match for the most potent nations of Europe, with the colonies thrown into their scale, they may go on securely. But if they are not assured of this, it would be certainly unwise, by trying the event of another campaign, to risk our accepting a foreign aid, which may, perhaps, not be obtainable, but on condition of everlasting avulsion from Great Britain. This would be thought a hard condition to those who still wish for reunion with their parent country. I am sincerely one of those, and would rather be in dependence on Great Britain, properly limited, than on any nation upon earth, or than on no nation. But I am one of those, too, who, rather than submit to the rights of legislating for us, assumed by the British Parliament, and which late experience has shewn they will so cruelly exercise, would lend my hand to sink the whole Island in the ocean.

"If undeceiving the minister, as to matters of fact, may change his disposition, it will, perhaps, be in your power, by assisting to do this, to render a service to the whole empire, at the most critical time, certainly, that it has ever seen. Whether Britain shall continue the head of the greatest empire on earth, or shall return to her original station in the political scale of Europe, depends, perhaps, on the resolutions of the succeeding winter. God send they may be wise and salutary for us all. I shall be glad to hear from you as often as you may be disposed to think of things here. You may be at liberty, I expect, to communicate some things, consistently with your honour, and the duties you will owe to a protecting nation. Such a communication among individuals, may be mutually beneficial to the contending parties." On the 29th of November he addressed a second letter to Mr. Randolph, in which he expressed himself as follows. (p. 152.) "It is an immense misfortune, to the whole empire, to have a King of such a disposition at such a time. We are told, and every thing proves it true, that he is the bitterest enemy we have. His minister is able, and that

satisfies me that ignorance or wickedness, somewhere, controls him. In an earlier part of this contest, our petitions told him, that from our King there was but one appeal. The admonition was despised, and that appeal forced on us. To undo his empire, he has but one truth more to learn; that, after colonies have drawn the sword, there is but one step more they can take. That step is now pressed upon us, by the measures adopted, as if they were afraid we would not take it. Believe me, dear Sir, there is not in the British Empire, a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do. But by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connexion on such terms as the British Parliament propose; and in this, I think I speak the sentiments of America. We want neither inducement nor power, to declare and assert a separation. It is will, alone, which is wanting, and that is growing apace under the fostering hand of our King. One bloody campaign will probably decide, everlasting, our future course; I am sorry to find a bloody campaign is decided on."

At our Legation in Paris, it is considered at the present day, when a brisk commerce subsists between the United States and France, and when fast sailing packets are regularly interchanged three times every month, that, upon an average, three months is as short a time as can be counted on for sending a letter to the United States and receiving an answer to it. In 1775 and 6, when navigation was less improved and expeditious than it now is, when a war was raging between America and England, and when of course ordinary intercourse by vessels of commerce was cut off, seven months was as short a time as could have been calculated on for Mr. Jefferson's letters to reach Mr. Randolph, for Mr. Randolph's getting access to the British Minister and closing in failure or success the overture confided to him, and for his answer communicating the result of his negotiation to reach Mr. Jefferson. It will appear therefore that at least as late as the last of June 1776, Mr. Jefferson preferred reconciliation with England to national independence, "yielded to no man in the British Empire" in "partiality to our English connexion," had not "the will" to bring on a declaration of independence, and that if consequently he attached himself before that period to the "labouring majority," who were intent on propelling us to independence, he was playing a double part, was rowing one way and looking another—was providing a title to pardon, if not patronage, from the crown, should our "English connexion" be restored, and to favour from the States, should their independence be established. And there is no room to doubt, as well from his greedy appetite for universal and incompatible credit, as from the double-faced proceeding we are now considering, that if from an abundance of Jeffersons and a want of Washington, or even of Hamilton, Knox, and Lee, we had succumbed to Great Britain, Mr. Jefferson would have put forward his claim to reward for pre-eminent loyalty with the same eagerness, (and he might

have done it with greater truth,) which, under the opposite event, he actually manifested in asserting a title to bold and leading patriotism, and in founding on it his application for a pecuniary privilege.

But even should this plain inference be disputed, it must be conceded that if “partiality to our English connexion,” and not *accident*, restrained Mr. Jay from signing the declaration, it was *accident* alone which induced Mr. Jefferson to sign it. It does not appear from any thing which ever proceeded from Mr. Jay’s pen, that while he was a member of the Revolutionary Congress, he was corresponding as late as November, 1775, with a gentleman in London in the employment and confidence of the British Government, for the express purpose of preventing a declaration of independence, and of bringing about a renewal of “our English connexion.” If he did at any time urge reflection or advise delay, in reference to the irrevocable step of independence, it was no doubt from motives of patriotism and prudence, and instead of retarding “preparations,” was in favour of retarding “proceedings” until adequate preparations could be made to support them, and not with any view to the result of a private negotiation with the public enemy.

It would indeed seem, as somewhat characteristic of Mr. Jefferson, that a sort of chastising infatuation directed his slanders, making him falsely ascribe to others, those very motives to the influence of which his conscience taught him, that he himself was but too liable. The repetition of this process, by exposing its iniquity, at last defeats its purpose, and enables truth to overcome by its essential virtue the art of falsehood. In the present case, while it vindicates the many victims of Mr. Jefferson’s injustice, it will leave upon his own name the stains which he endeavoured to attach to the memory of Gen. Lee, and to his illustrious friends, comrades, and compatriots.\*

[\*] Another instance of this will be found in an attack of Mr. Jefferson upon the reputation of Mr. Hooper, a revolutionary patriot of North Carolina, than whom, Mr. Jefferson says in a letter to Mr. Adams, “we had not a greater tory in Congress.” Mr. Tucker (Vol. II. p. 421) regrets this heedless blow at the memory of a good and useful man, and, to mitigate it, explains the two senses in which Mr. Jefferson uses the word *tory*; and says that we must not understand it here as Mr. Jefferson habitually applied it to the federalists, “but only as expressing too protracted an attachment to Great Britain, and an unwillingness to separate from her.” And in this sense Mr. Tucker contends that it was applicable to Hooper, because we have his own declarations to the provincial Congress of North Carolina, in Hillsborough, in September 1775, that he did not desire “to shake off all connexion with the parent state,” but his most earnest wish and prayer was to be restored to the state we were in before 1763.

But we have just seen in the text, that Mr. Jefferson declared, so late as the 29th of November, 1775, that there was “not in the British empire a man who more cordially loved a union with Great Britain than he did.” So we have proof that his attachment to the mother country was protracted two months longer than we have of Hooper’s unwillingness to separate from her. There-

## LETTER XVII.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

FROM what has been said and written of this distinguished man, it appears that from the commencement of our revolutionary struggles to their end, he was for patriotism, statesmanship, and oratory, regarded as the Cicero of his country. He was remarkable even "amidst the crowd of patriots" for a sensitive and impatient love of liberty; and this he encouraged and inflamed by a fond contemplation of those bright and melancholy examples, which the victims of ancient and modern tyranny have left in the characters of Phocion, of Cato, of Sidney, and of Russel. This gave to his classical and chaste elocution, a tone of depth and inspiration, which, set off as it was by a majestic figure, a noble countenance, and a graceful delivery, charmed while it roused or convinced his auditory. Though he never poured down upon agitated assemblies, a cataract of mingled passion and logic like Patrick Henry, yet he rivetted the

fore, by the combined shewing of Mr. Jefferson and his biographer, the former was a greater tory than Hooper by two months, and therefore he ought to have said to Mr. Adams, "there was not a greater tory in Congress than Hooper, except myself." As he did not do it, however, it is kind in Mr. Tucker to have supplied the omission.

But to return to Mr. Jay, the subject of the just eulogy of the text, nothing is better established than the truth of Mr. Adams' observation, that it was accident alone which had prevented his name from appearing among the signatures to the Declaration of Independence. For the Convention of New York, which had the right to do so, commanded his presence in that body. It was sitting at the White Plains when it received the Declaration of Independence from Congress, which was immediately referred to a Committee, of which Mr. Jay was chairman, and "he almost *instanter* reported the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted.

*"Resolved unanimously,* That the reasons assigned by the Continental Congress for declaring these United Colonies free and independent states, are cogent and conclusive; and that while we lament the cruel necessity which has rendered this measure unavoidable, we approve the same, and will, at the risk of our lives and fortunes, join with the other colonies in supporting it."

This interesting resolve is still to be seen in Mr. Jay's hand-writing, among the records of his native state, as we learn from his Life by his son, Vol. I. p. 45.

I had selected many extracts from the same work for insertion here, but I find myself in the dilemma of either citing too little to do full justice to Mr. Jay, or of increasing too much the bulk of this volume, which has already grown, under my hand, far beyond what I wished or expected. I beg leave, therefore, to refer the reader to the work itself, as presenting a faithful portraiture of one of the wisest statesmen, purest patriots, and best men, that ever adorned any age or blessed any country.]

excited attention and enchanted fancy of his hearers, with a regulated flow of harmonious language, generous sentiment, and lucid argument, which, like the stream of a far-descended flood, had more of the force than the noise of a torrent.

In his personal character, he was just, benevolent, and high-spirited; domestic in his tastes, and too proud to be ambitious of popularity.

Though not positively slandered by Mr. Jefferson, he is treated with a degree of injustice, that nothing but the force and pre-eminence of his merit can account for. For they were never rivals; Mr. Lee, as long as he remained on the public stage, always over-topping Mr. Jefferson in estimation, both in Virginia and in Congress; and he died about two years before Mr. Jefferson became Vice President. This superiority is manifest from the fact of his having been chosen one of the first delegates to the first Congress, from his name appearing on almost all the important committees of that body, from his having been selected by the Virginia delegation for the task of moving the declaration of independence; and it is accounted for by his passionate love of liberty, his uncompromising patriotism, his captivating eloquence, and his fame for wisdom.

Mr. Jefferson assails his memory chiefly by detraction and implication; by connecting his name sometimes with insufficient praise, at others with disreputable circumstances. Thus, when he mentions Mr. Lee commendably, it is simply as one undistinguished among a throng of popular leaders, as in Vol. I. p. 5. "The lead in the house, on these subjects, being no longer left to the old members, Mr. Henry, R. H. Lee, F. L. Lee, and three or four others, whom I do not recollect, and myself, &c." and p. 7, "Our other patriots, Randolph, the Lees, Nicholas, and Pendleton, stopped at the half-way house of John Dickenson," &c. In short, if we believe Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Lee was sometimes his equal in ability, in zeal and boldness, never. Of course, in a list he remembered to have read of patriots prescribed by the crown, he recollects his own name, but not that of Mr. Lee. In this spirit of disparagement, when he comes to observe that the draught of an address to the people of Great Britain, prepared by Mr. Lee, was not adopted by Congress, he says simply that it was "disapproved and recommitted." But when the same fate befel his own draught of a declaration of the causes of our taking up arms, he says, "it was too strong for Mr. Dickenson," and insinuates that Congress was so indulgent to Mr. Dickenson, that it was entirely with a view to gratify him, that his draught was preferred to Mr. Jefferson's. The fact however is, that all the papers prepared by Mr. Lee, were thought too highly tinctured with resentment and independence, for that early stage of the contest;—as is mentioned by Marshall, in regard to the draught of a petition to the king:\*

\* Vol. IV. p. 627.

Jefferson's high-mettled patriotism, we have nothing but the threadbare authority of his own assertion.

The following instance of his injustice to Mr. Lee is proof that his wit was less dramatic than malicious. (Vol. I. p. 8.) "On the 24th, a Committee, which had been appointed to prepare a declaration of the causes of taking up arms, brought in their report, (drawn, I believe, by J. Rutledge,) which not being liked, the House recommitted it, on the 26th, and added Mr. Dickenson and myself to the Committee. On the rising of the House, the Committee having not yet met, I happened to find myself near Governor W. Livingston, and proposed to him to draw the paper. He excused himself, and proposed that I should draw it. On my pressing him with urgency, 'We are yet but new acquaintances, Sir,' says he, 'why are you so earnest for my doing it?' "Because," said I, "I have been informed that you drew the address to the people of Great Britain, a production certainly of the finest pen in America." 'On that,' says he, 'perhaps, Sir, you may not have been correctly informed.' I had received the information in Virginia, from Col. Harrison, on his return from that Congress. Lee, Livingston, and Jay, had been the committee for that draught. The first drawn by Lee, had been disapproved and recommitted. The second had been drawn by Jay, but being presented by Governor Livingston, had led Col. Harrison into the error. The next morning, walking in the hall of Congress, many members being assembled, but the house not yet formed, I observed Mr. Jay speaking to R. H. Lee, and leading him by the button of his coat to me, 'I understand, Sir,' said he to me, 'that this gentleman informed you that Governor Livingston drew the address to the people of Great Britain.' I assured him at once, that I had not received that information from Mr. Lee, and that not a word had ever passed on the subject between Mr. Lee and myself; and after some explanations, the subject was dropped. These gentlemen had had some sparrings in debate before, and continued ever after very hostile to each other."

As the spirit of a dialogue like this, when committed to paper, depends entirely on the perfect accuracy of its relation; and as in the beginning of his memoir, (Vol. I. p. 1.) Mr. Jefferson acknowledges the lapse of at least forty-five years, between the occurrence of this conversation, and the writing his record of it; I am to be understood as disputing the propriety of his fiction, rather than the truth of his statement.

Its marvellousness is apparent, from at least three circumstances; the high-spirited temper of Mr. Lee; the proverbial gentleness of Mr. Jay, and the good manners of both. Here are two of the most distinguished men in the first Congress—that august assembly, every member of which felt the destiny of his country weighing on his shoulders; who had sparred so much in debate, as to become very hostile to each other; when all at once, one of them, the milder of the two, seizes the other by the button of the coat, and leads him

off to a third member, whom he requests peremptorily to declare whether his captive colleague had not made a certain false statement to him. This third member, from a benevolent apprehension that the button-led gentleman may be caned on the spot, in the presence of "many members," hastens to reply, tells the angry interrogator "at once," that he had received no such statement from his unhappy colleague, and so far from it, that not a word on the subject had been exchanged between them. Can any thing be more incredible than this? Is it possible that Mr. Jay would have taken any member, towards whom he entertained a reciprocal hostility, by the button of his coat, and have led him off through the hall, to arraign him before another member, on a charge of falsehood? Is it probable, or even possible, that Mr. Lee would have suffered himself, in the same temper of hostility, to be thus snubbed and conducted? Does not the supposition violate every probability arising from human nature and social habits? Admitting that Mr. Jay did suppose Mr. Lee had reported to Mr. Jefferson that Mr. Livingston was the writer of the address in question, and that he resented this erroneous report as a personal injury, would he not, in proceeding to redress it, either have demanded of Mr. Lee whether he did or did not make that statement, or have applied to Mr. Jefferson separately, to know whether he had asserted that Mr. Lee did make it? But by Mr. Jefferson's account, the meek and conscientious Mr. Jay, neither applied to the person reported to have done him injustice, for an avowal or disavowal of the act, nor to the individual represented to have witnessed it, for a correction or confirmation of the report, but seized the suspected perpetrator of this enormous offence in the Hall of Congress, and led him up to the supposed witness. After finding himself entirely in the wrong, in exhibiting this indecent anxiety about his reputation, he makes no apology for his gross misbehaviour, but retires, breathing a fiercer spirit of enmity and resentment, than that in which he had so rudely advanced.

Whoever believes this story, must also believe that both Mr. Lee and Mr. Jay, were strangers to the feelings and manners of gentlemen, although they were known to be two of the most polished and enlightened men in the United States.

As there was probably some slight foundation for this anecdote, inasmuch as the spider must have something on which to suspend his web, it may be worth while to suggest what might have been the facts out of which the slander was concocted. The probability is that Mr. Jefferson receiving, as he says he did, the impression from Col. Harrison, that Mr. Livingston was the author of the address, had communicated it as a fact, to Mr. Livingston and to other members, and that in consequence of the more or less extensive prevalence of Mr. Jefferson's error in the matter, Mr. Jay felt himself called on to justify his own previous statements in regard to it. For though he was a man of too much dignity to be strenuous in

laying claim to any little credit of this kind, he was also a man of too much purity to rest quiet under the suspicion of falsehood. To relieve himself from an uneasiness of this sort, let us see how, as a man of sense and good breeding, he was to proceed. Certainly not by flying headlong at Mr. Lee, and dragging him before Mr. Jefferson, without inquiring previously of either whether Mr. Lee had wronged him. This would have been exposing himself for no earthly object to the resentment and contempt of Mr. Lee, as well as to the ridicule of Mr. Jefferson. His mode of proceeding would have been either positively to repeat the assertion that he did write the address, or to obtain the testimony of some gentleman who not only knew, but would be admitted to know, that Mr. Livingston was not the author of it, and that he Mr. Jay was. As the Committee, who reported the address, consisted of Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston and Mr. Jay, this competent gentleman could only be Mr. Lee or Mr. Livingston. Mr. Lee was not concerned in the advantage of the claim, while Mr. Livingston was to receive all its equivocal benefit. Delicacy and discretion, would thus concur in inducing Mr. Jay to prefer a resort to Mr. Lee. He, therefore, with the familiarity which their official relationship, and the nature of his object inspired, requested Mr. Lee to set his colleague right in this business, and thus to destroy the injurious rumour at its source, within the hall of Congress. Of course, when he approached Mr. Jefferson for this purpose, he was glad to have Mr. Lee at hand to refer to, and no doubt said to the former—"I understand, Sir, that you have asserted that the address to the people of Great Britain was written by Mr. Livingston:"—so that the haste with which Mr. Jefferson explained, was not so much out of any apprehension for Mr. Lee's safety, as might at first sight appear.

This version, which reconciles the affair to moral probabilities, derives additional verisimilitude from another circumstance in Mr. Jefferson's statement, that is, if that statement be so far admitted to be true, as to require refutation. He says, when he told Mr. Livingston he understood he wrote the address, adding, "I consider it a production certainly of the finest pen in America," that Mr. Livingston, instead of replying directly and clearly, "I assure you I did not write it," or "It was written by Mr. Jay," made this hesitating and equivocal answer—"On that perhaps, sir, you may not have been correctly informed." This equivocal reply could not fail to reach Mr. Jay, and to direct him more decidedly to refer to Mr. Lee. It would however be extremely unfair to the character of Governor Livingston, to impute to him, on ground so unsafe as Mr. Jefferson's memoranda, this unmanly and illiberal ambiguity.\*

[\* I here beg leave to refer to an extremely interesting letter from Mr. Jay to Mr. Adams, (Jay's Life, Vol. I. p. 380,) and extract from it the following paragraph to establish distinctly the position assumed in the text.

"The subsequent occurrences you mention have not escaped my recollection. I was informed, and I believe correctly, that one person in particular of those

The explanation here offered involves, in regard to one point, a construction of Mr. Jefferson's language that may be disputed. He says—"I observed Mr. Jay speaking to R. H. Lee and leading him by the button of his coat to me." Now, admitting, for the sake of argument, his statement with respect to the temper and purpose of Mr. Jay at the time he was thus speaking to Mr. Lee, he must of necessity be understood to have been inquiring whether Mr. Lee had or had not "informed Mr. Jefferson that Governor Livingston drew the address to the people of Great Britain." Of this inquiry the necessary consequence was, that Mr. Lee returned an answer in the negative or the affirmative. Suppose then that he answered—"No, I did not inform Mr. Jefferson that Governor Livingston drew the address to the people of Great Britain." Is it possible to conceive that Mr. Jay would have instantly led him up to Mr. Jefferson and said "I understand, sir, that this gentleman informed you that Governor Livingston drew the address to the people of Great Britain?" Suppose, on the other hand, that Mr. Lee answered, "Yes, I did tell Mr. Jefferson so"—besides that there would then have been no occasion for the appeal to Mr. Jefferson, how could he have declared to Mr. Jay that he had not received that information from Mr. Lee, and that not a word had ever passed on the subject between Mr. Lee and himself? It is

you specify, had endeavoured, by oblique intimations, to insinuate a suspicion that the address to the people of *Great Britain* was not written by me, but by Governor Livingston. That gentleman repelled the insinuation. He knew and felt what was due to truth, and explicitly declared it."

This extract, besides relieving Gov. Livingston's conduct from every shadow of "illiberal ambiguity," "casts ominous conjecture" upon the whole anecdote. For from Mr. Jefferson's statement, Mr. Lee must have been "that one person in particular," against whom Mr. Jay's suspicions had been directed. If so, Mr. Jefferson's assurances must have dissipated them; and in that case Mr. Jay could not have believed, when he wrote the above paragraph, that he had been correctly informed upon that subject. If, on the other hand, we suppose that Mr. Jay's suspicions never rested upon Mr. Lee, we cannot believe that he accused him to Mr. Jefferson. From this dilemma there is no way of escaping, except by resorting to conjectures much more improbable than those which would impeach the accuracy of Mr. Jefferson's testimony.

The most important service, however, which this letter renders to the memory of Mr. Lee, is to relieve him from a very unenviable position in which he is placed by an error in Mr. Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry. It seems that he did not even write the address to the people of England, on the reading of which, according to Mr. Wirt, "great disappointment was expressed on every countenance, and a dead silence ensued for some minutes." Indeed the whole passage is proved to be too full of error for any part of it to inspire confidence.

Nor does this letter of Mr. Jay's indicate any of that hostility to Mr. Lee which Mr. Jefferson testifies to have been mutual in the breasts of these eminent men, but bears the marks of an opposite feeling. For it states that Mr. Lee, Livingston and Jay being placed on a committee to prepare a memorial to the people of *British America*, and an address to the people of *Great Britain*, "the committee assigned the memorial, which was first in order, and also deemed first in importance, to Mr. Lee,"—thus volunteering a piece of testimony in favour of Mr. Lee, which savours more of partiality than hostility.]

inconsistent with common sense to suppose that Mr. Lee would say, that he had made this false and offensive assertion when he had not made it, and is besides incompatible with the recreant exhibition here made of him by Mr. Jefferson. Upon the whole then, it appears that the truth in all probability was, as I have already intimated, that Mr. Jefferson set about this false report, and was confronted by Mr. Jay with Mr. Lee in order to correct it, and that the confusion with which he was himself affected at the time, left a sting in his excessive self-love, which, in addition to his general intolerance of superior merit, festered into unforgiving enmity towards each of these illustrious men.

The most flagrant evidence of his unfairness to Mr. Lee is afforded by the fact that in a letter to Mr. Wells, (Vol. I. p. 94,) he gives an account of the circumstances attending both the motion for a declaration of independence, and the adoption of the declaration itself, and though his letter covers six large octavo pages, never once mentions the name of Mr. Lee!

It has been already intimated that Mr. Jefferson, who conceived God to be "either matter or nothing," was apt to employ the most devotional language in conveying the most incredible assertions. As examples, you may recollect that in presenting his portrait of Gen. Washington to Dr. Jones, and affirming his belief that Washington was throughout his administration preparing his countrymen for a gradual and easy submission to monarchy, he swears down the disbelief of the Doctor in the following "sacrosanct" terms:—"These are my opinions of Gen. Washington, which I would vouch at the judgment seat of God." Again, in order to give a sort of importance to the ridiculous anecdote respecting Hamilton's opinion of the English constitution, he introduces it with the following solemn attestation. (Vol. IV. p. 450.) "In proof of this I will relate an anecdote, for the truth of which I attest the God who made me."

So, in professing to relate circumstantially to Mr. Wells the proceedings in Congress on the motion for independence, he makes reference to a document containing, as he says, "Notes taken by himself at the time of what was passing on that memorable occasion;" and in order to suppress amazement at his omission of the name of the man who moved that "memorable" proposition, he tells Mr. Wells, (Vol. I. p. 96,) "I will give you some extracts from a written document on that subject, for the truth of which I pledge myself to heaven and earth." As no one at that time was likely to question the assertion of Mr. Jefferson, respecting an event with which he was known to have been familiar, that assertion founded on contemporary notes, and that event unconnected with the policy of his administration or the conduct of his party, this unnecessary adjuration betrays a consciousness of defect in the statement placed under its convoy. Consistently with this inference, the first of his extracts commences in these words:—"Friday, June 7th, 1776. The delegates from Virginia moved, in obedience to instructions from their

constituents, that the Congress should declare that these United States are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States," &c. In order to see at a glance the difference between this and a fair account of the same transaction, it will only be necessary to refer to Marshall, who after some preliminary observations says,

"The following resolution was moved by Richard Henry Lee and seconded by John Adams."

It is true that the Virginia legislature had instructed their delegates to bring forward a resolution to this effect, but it is in the highest degree invidious in giving an account of so great and perilous a step to suppress the name of the mover, and to depart from that particular so far, as to state that the whole delegation moved the resolution.

The truth is, as there would seem to have been two successive delegations of that momentous duty, one from the Virginia legislature to their delegates in Congress, and the other from the body of the delegation to Mr. Lee, if it was fair to attribute the motion which this bold and eloquent statesman actually made, to his immediate constituents, it was just to refer it from them to their immediate constituency, and to have said that on the 7th June, 1776, the legislature of Virginia made the motion. If Mr. Lee was but an agent for the transmission of this proposition, so were his immediate employers; and if the retrospection were justifiable in regard to him, it was also proper with reference to them. But this besides being obviously absurd, would have removed Mr. Jefferson from all connexion with this event, whereas the invidious plan which he adopted, while it obscured the name of Mr. Lee, reduced him to the gregarious equality of "*Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilocumque,*" brought himself into immediate contact with the revolution; a position which, by the help of his authorship of the declaration, would give him a figure in history, preeminent above all his associates.

What would have been thought of the father of history, had he recorded the determination of the Athenians at the approach of Xerxes to desert their fortifications and man their ships, without mentioning the name of the individual who proposed that bold resolution? What should we now say of an author who should describe the battle of New Orleans, without mentioning the name of Jackson? He would be despised and execrated, although his injustice would not have surpassed that of Mr. Jefferson.

If, as is probable, his colleagues united in confiding to Mr. Lee the conduct of this great measure, it is proof of their conviction that from his political courage, his zeal and eloquence, he would introduce the motion with becoming spirit, and support it with adequate ability. His speech has not been preserved, but the accounts brought down by tradition represent it as worthy of the subject, and equal to the crisis. Had Mr. Jefferson been, as he was not, in possession of such oratorical advantages as drew the

concurrence of his colleagues on Mr. Lee, and in consequence, been selected as the mover of the declaration of independence, it is impossible from the nature of his outstanding overtures to a confidential servant of the British crown, to conceive, that he could have introduced and supported the proposition with that confidence and animation which were requisite to propel it through the doubts and scruples of Congress. On the other hand, Mr. Lee, impeded by no conflicting engagements, with his understanding, his heart, and his conscience, all enlisted in favour of independence, assumed the dangerous responsibility of proposing and urging a measure which even now perplexes monarchs, and which—had it found no better supporters either in battle or debate than the man who, though a witness to his eloquence and patriotism, endeavoured to erase his name from the annals of that glorious event—would have converted the rostrum from which he spoke into a gibbet. For had all the members of Congress been as inefficient as Mr. Jefferson, and all the governors of States as pusillanimous, not Washington himself could have saved the country. And in the event of our re-subjugation, what member of Congress would have been singled out for royal vengeance? That one certainly, who greatly daring for the liberty of his fellow-citizens, had exhorted them to prefer the trials of an unequal war to the disgrace of servitude, and had urged them, in order to be free, to cast off their allegiance to an oppressive King.

Besides, against this sort of distinction Mr. Jefferson was by no means unprovided. He could have pleaded with perfect truth that the step of independence having been resolved on, it mattered little by whom or in what terms the declaration was written; that in writing it he had only done what, had he declined the task, some other member would have done in very similar language; that although he was under instructions from the Assembly of Virginia, to move the declaration of independence, he had neither proposed that measure himself, nor after it was proposed, had uttered a single word in its support. That so far from desiring independence, he was sincerely anxious for a reconciliation between the two countries, and had rather be in limited dependence on Great Britain “than any nation upon earth, or than on no nation.” That Mr. Randolph, an officer of the crown, could testify, that soon after he (Mr. Jefferson) got a seat in Congress, he had of his own accord solicited Mr. Randolph’s intervention with the British government, with a view of bringing the revolted colonies again under his Majesty’s lawful sway; and that as late as the last of the previous November, he had renewed the same overture, repeated the same counsels, and avowed the same predilections, in a letter to Mr. Randolph. That it could not be imputed to him as a fault, that the advice he gave had been disregarded, and that such steps as were necessary to bring about a renewal of “our English connexion,” had not been taken; and that if independence was subsequently declared—upon

Mr. Lee, who, while he (Mr. Jefferson) was in daily expectation of learning from Mr. Randolph the result of his loyal overture, had the temerity to propose it—and not on him, should the consequences of that rash and audacious measure be visited.

There would have been, it must be confessed, greater justice in this appeal to royal mercy, than in the claim he sets up to credit for a republican ardour, which not only distanced the measured pace of his contemporaries, but outstripped the fervid patriotism of Richard H. Lee.

As this anecdote about *Mr. Jay and the button*, represents Mr. Lee as little better than a poltroon, it affords occasion for yet another comparative view of the accused and the accuser, as they appeared in those times which are truly said to have “tried men’s souls.”

During the war of the revolution, and, I believe, while Mr. Jefferson was Governor of Virginia, a British squadron which had been scouring the waters and wasting the shores of the Chesapeake, taking advantage of a favourable breeze, suddenly came to, off the coast of Virginia, where the majestic cliffs of Westmoreland overlook the stormy and sea-like Potomac. Mr. Lee was at that time on one of those visits to his family with which, from the permanent sittings of Congress, the members were of necessity occasionally accommodated. He hastily collected from the nearest circle of his neighbours a small and ill-armed band, repaired at their head to the point on which the enemy had commenced a descent, and without regard to his inferiority of means and numbers, instantly attacked them. He drove the party on shore back into their barges, and held them aloof, until the ships were brought to cover the landing with round shot and shells, which he had no means of returning. Then as he was the first in advance so he was the last to retire, as men who were with him have since his death often said. Several of the hostile party were killed or wounded, among them an officer whom they carried off. One man they buried on the shore. In a grove of aged beech trees, not far from Mr. Lee’s residence, rest the remains of this unknown but unforgotten foe. The belated homeward-going hunter, as he drags his tired steps along that proud and melancholy coast, hastens to pass this grave without a name. His comrade is awed into silence, his hounds with startled instinct follow close at his heels, he hears a deeper moan in the night wind, a more sullen murmur in the angry wave, and overcome with a pleasing terror continues his quickened pace, until the course of a limpid stream is crossed. Then he talks again with his companion; tells of the men who when his sire was young, were the pride of Westmoreland; of Washington’s renown in arms, of Lee’s fame for eloquence; how the first went abroad to distant battles and high commands; how the second returned from solemn councils to his poor but hospitable hills, delighted to disperse among his neighbours the fruits of wisdom and benevolence.

Such was the conduct of Richard Henry Lee, who was also “unprepared by his line of life and education for the command of armies.” And such were the impressions left by his virtues on the minds of those who best understood his character, in the country\* where he lived and died, but where, alas, not one of his name remains.

The same tone of disparagement prevails in a letter of Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Adams on the 22nd of August, 1813, (Vol. IV. p. 206,) in which he observes, “Marshall in his first volume chapter III. p. 180, ascribes the petition to the King of 1774, to the pen of Richard Henry Lee. I think myself it was not written by him, as well from what I recollect to have heard, as from the internal evidence of style. His was loose, vague, frothy, rhetorical. He was a poorer writer than his brother Arthur, and Arthur’s standing may be seen in his Monitor’s letters, to insure the sale of which they took the precaution of tacking to them a new edition of the Farmer’s letters; like Mezentius, who *“Mortua jungebat corpora vivis.”*”

In the first place, Marshall in his fourth volume, p. 627, had corrected this error of his first, and in doing so, he observes that Mr. Lee’s draught “was disapproved because it did not manifest sufficiently that spirit of conciliation which then animated Congress.” An ostracism, of which Mr. Jefferson, as has been noticed, endeavoured to appropriate the credit to a rejected draught of his own.

In the second place, it is somewhat strange considering the “vague” and “frothy” diction of Mr. Lee, and Mr. Jefferson’s chaste horror of his rhetorical looseness, that it should have been for a long time supposed by a large and intelligent class of the community, that Mr. Lee was the real author of the declaration of independence, and that Mr. Jefferson had only reported it. This impression could hardly have existed, if the public had entertained the same opinion respecting Mr. Lee’s style which Mr. Jefferson here expresses; for although the declaration of independence, in its published form, is faulty in point of style, it is neither “frothy” nor “rhetorical.” Specimens of Mr. Lee’s style are before the world in the interesting compilation of his letters lately published by his grandson. These I have read, though not with particular reference to their diction; and they appeared to be written in a plain unpretending style, by a man, who well read in Classical and English lore, was more intent on his thoughts than his language, and to have that ease and directness of expression which is the reverse of vagueness and froth.

\* Westmoreland, situated on the North East frontier of Virginia, which, though not one of our large or fertile counties, has given birth to a number of eminent men. Besides Washington, may be enumerated Richard Henry Lee, and his three brothers, Thomas, Francis, and Arthur, the late judge Washington, and the late President Monroe. Of these distinguished citizens, all, except the last, are defamed, either by slander or detraction, directly or indirectly, in the “Writings of Thomas Jefferson.” The free population of Westmoreland has never exceeded, I believe, five thousand.

In regard to the style of his brother Arthur, which Mr. Jefferson describes as so exceedingly indifferent, it is a little remarkable that I came across a manuscript of Arthur Lee's, some few years ago, so much like the declaration of independence, both in substance and language, that I took occasion to mention it in a letter to Mr. Jefferson, and at the same time to inquire, seeing that Arthur Lee's paper was of prior date, whether he, Mr. Jefferson, had not read it, before he prepared that celebrated document. His reply, as well as I recollect, was that he had never seen the paper of Arthur Lee, but that does not disprove the closeness of the resemblance. The "Monitor's letters" I never saw. It is probable they were dedicated to the discussion of some patriotic topic of strong but temporary interest, and that those who thought with Mr. Lee in relation to it, considered them worthy of being appended to the "Farmer's letters" —as Mr. Jefferson himself, in respect to a speech of Mr. Gallatin says, (Vol. III. p. 324,) "it is worthy of being printed at the end of the 'Federalist.'" Had this suggestion of his been adopted and his malice thereupon imitated, it is to be hoped the sneerer at Mr. Gallatin's style, would not have been so awkward as to give the life of the literary compound to Mr. Gallatin, and its mortal dulness to the Federalist, a blunder which, by his trite quotation, Mr. Jefferson commits.\*

[\* As to the merit of Arthur's Lee's writings, it is sufficient to say that his Monitor's Letters, and those under the signature of Junius Americanus, were collected and published in cheap pamphlets, in which shape they went through many editions, were extensively circulated, and so much esteemed as to have been printed by several associations and public corporations in England; and that his "Appeal to the English Nation" was, for a long time, attributed to Lord Chatham. That fact is not only enough to repel the charge of "vagueness and frothiness," but to stamp it with exactly the opposite character, as every judge of such matters will find it to be. As a sample of its nervous brevity, take this conclusion of a letter to Lord Chatham.

"My lord, I have but one more word. When the acts of this country respecting America are *just*, they will never be questioned; when they are *unjust*, they will never be obeyed.

"JUNIUS AMERICANUS."

(Life of A. Lee, by R. H. Lee, Vol. I. p. 21.)

At page 209 of the edition of Woodfall's Junius, printed in Philadelphia in 1813, will be found a letter of that celebrated writer to Wilkes, in which he says, "My American namesake is plainly a man of abilities;" and concludes, "I hope that since he has opposed me, where he thinks me wrong, he will be equally ready to assist me, where he thinks me right."

Few will imagine that Junius could have been so much mistaken in the merits of a writer as to request assistance from one, whose productions, when united to those of able authors, would but remind the reader of the cruelties of Mezentius. On the contrary, even by the side of the letters of Junius himself, those of his American namesake may be quite as aptly placed as *Pegasus* was joined to the ear of Achilles with *Xanthus* and *Balius*,

"Ος καὶ θυντὸς ἐών ἔπειθ' οὐραῖς ἀθανάτοισι.

Who being mortal, matched the immortal steeds.

Nor, when in 1775, the city of London sent to the king and parliament a

From what has been already observed it is not easy to suppose that in regard to style, Mr. Jefferson was qualified to be a critic or a preceptor. His own is to be admired neither for purity nor strength, refinement nor felicity. Its texture is the same for letters and dissertations, for familiar and diplomatic correspondence; and it is as mechanical and monotonous as the music of a hand organ. There is not the slightest variety in his diction, neither the elegant choice of art, nor the easy carelessness of nature. If it ever glows with animation from the heart, the animation springs from the two most odious feelings, vanity and malice. In the four volumes of his writings it would be difficult to find a sentence beautifully simple, tersely energetic, richly metaphorical, powerfully expanded, or nobly elevated. A diplomatic manner and a French *tournure*,

remonstrance against the colonial measures of the ministry, is it probable that they would have selected to compose that document any other than a writer whose reputation was well established? Yet they appointed Mr. Lee for that purpose, and "the style and spirit of the remonstrance were greatly admired, and it was extensively circulated throughout the kingdom."—(Life of A. Lee, Vol. I. p. 46.)

Indeed, some of the happiest hits to be found in any one's writings are to be met with in his. For instance, he is urging the great Frederick to adopt, for his conduct towards this country, a precedent furnished by that of Henry IV. of France towards Charles, Duke of Sudermania, after he procured himself to be crowned king of Sweden; and concludes his reference to this illustrious authority with the following happy compliment: "The example of Henry the Great is worthy of a prince who no less merits the title."

But skill as a writer, though important to Mr. Lee as arming him with an effective weapon to be used in the service of his country, furnishes the smallest part of his title to its gratitude. His zeal, perseverance, efficiency and disinterestedness, are the great qualities which entitle him to the highest praise. The spirit with which he entered upon his public career is evinced in the following extract from a letter of his to his friend, the Earl of Shelburne, afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne.

*Paris, December 23d, 1776.*

"My Lord,—A very few hours after my last letter to your Lordship brought me the desire of my country that I should serve her in a public capacity. Your Lordship thinks too well of me, I hope, to suppose I could hesitate a moment. In fact, almost the same minute saw me bid adieu, perhaps forever, to a country where I had fixed my fortunes, and to a people whom I most respected, and could have loved. But the first object of my life is my country—the first wish of my heart is public liberty. I must see, therefore, the liberties of my country established, or perish in her last struggle."

To the ability with which he discharged his public duties, I will cite the testimony of Samuel Adams, extracted from a letter of his to Mr. Warren. "Now you tell me their art is to prejudice the people against the Lees, and to propagate that I am a friend to them. How trifling is this! Am I accountable to the people for my opinions of men? If I have found from long and intimate acquaintance with those gentlemen that they are and have been, from the beginning of this contest, among the most able and zealous defenders of the rights of America and mankind, shall I not be their friend? I will avow my friendship to them in the face of the world. As an inhabitant of Massachusetts Bay, I should think myself ungrateful not to esteem Arthur Lee most highly for his voluntary services to that State, in times of her greatest need, to the injury of his private interest, and at the risk of his life."]

which completely blight the spirit of the English idiom, are the peculiar properties of his style. And these, together with its mechanical and uniform structure, account for the fact, that while small parcels of it came to be much admired by the public, the wholesale quantity now exposed, proves distressing to the least fastidious reader.

Mr. Lee, who is confessed to have been a more eloquent man than Mr. Jefferson, was also a better scholar; and it is more than probable would have appeared as a professed writer, as he did in the character of patriot and statesman, though vastly his inferior in pretension, greatly his superior in merit.

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## LETTER XVIII.

JOHN MARSHALL.

EXCEPT Alexander Hamilton, no man living or dead, was ever visited by more of Mr. Jefferson's abuse, than the present Chief Justice of the United States, and no man was ever more honoured by it. For it not only served to signalize his fellowship with those great and magnanimous men, whose actions have just been vindicated, but it furnished opportunity for the most perfect triumph that ever was achieved by the unexerted strength of merit, over the unassuaged rancour of injustice.

As statesman, diplomatist, author, or Judge, for more than a quarter of a century, he was the constant theme of Mr. Jefferson's obloquy, in all the forms in which it could be distributed; oral or written, official or private. And although he made no resistance to these injuries, attempted no retaliation, manifested no resentment; was lauded by no dependants, and supported by no dominant party; stood lofty and alone, the last official survivor of his class; while his enemy had mobs, and demagogues, and legislatures, to reverberate his hints and enforce his denunciations; yet at the time of Mr. Jefferson's death, there was scarcely a man even of his own party, who believed a single word he had ever uttered to the prejudice of John Marshall. A shade of doubt was perhaps kept up by a threat which his friends gave out mysteriously, purporting that he was to leave a posthumous refutation of the 5th volume of the life of Washington, and an overthrow of its author's political and

literary character. But no sooner appeared the *Jeffersoniana*, which are solemnly recommended to the world as "testimony" against Marshall's work, than the threat became harmless and contemptible. For it is incontestably true, that a mass of more inert folly and innoxious though putrescent slander, is not to be found any where in print, than is formed by these pretended historical materials.

They consist for the most part of such speeches as Mr. Jefferson chose to put into his own mouth, or into the mouths of men he either dreaded or hated—and resemble very much in their fabrication, the dialogue appended by Basil Hall to his travels in the United States, in which he appropriates all the smart observations to himself, and the silly ones to his republican interlocutor.

In the mode in which Mr. Jefferson's *Anas* have made their appearance, there is one circumstance likely to afford merriment at least. It is that on various occasions when allusion to Marshall is made, a *hiatus* is left in the text in order either to grant him the favour of a *post mortem* dissection, or else, as in the case of Gen. Lee, in the hope that a dead subject may prove more tractable to a bungling operator. Whatever be the motive, this sword of *wood* is still suspended over Marshall's reputation, which, it seems, while his life is spared, is not to be completely destroyed,

And here it is proper to remark, that inasmuch as Mr. Jefferson preserved his *Anas* for the express purpose of impugning the fairness of Marshall's historical narrative with respect to him and his party, it may be accounted unjust and illogical in controverting Mr. Jefferson's statements to rely on Marshall's disputed authority. I was sensible of this apparent incompetency as it regarded the Life of Washington, but upon perusing the "Writings" of Mr. Jefferson, I was at once convinced that it was only apparent; and that if a work so authentic, clear, and impartial as Marshall's could receive corroboration from any source, it could only be from so ostentatious, angry, and impotent an attack, as this posthumous one of Mr. Jefferson.

Specimens of the *Anas* have already been submitted to your notice, some from among those that profess to relate occurrences which Mr. Jefferson witnessed, and remarks that he made or heard, and some from those which profess to retail the reports of others. Of the former class was the Julius Cæsar anecdote of Hamilton, while to the latter chiefly belongs the following one, it being a fair sample of the positive tone in which they are delivered, and of the quantity of truth they contain. (Vol. IV. p. 515.) "February 12th, 1801, Edward Livingston tells me that Bayard applied to-day or last night to Gen. Samuel Smith, and represented to him the expediency of coming over to the States who vote for Burr; that there was nothing in the way of appointment which he might not command, and particularly mentioned the secretaryship of the navy. Smith asked him if he was authorized to make the offer. He said he was authorized. Smith told this to Livingston, and to Wilson

C. Nicholas, who confirms it to me. Bayard likewise tempted Livingston, not by offering him a particular office, but by representing to him, his, Livingston's intimacy and connexion with Burr, that from him he had every thing to expect if he came over to him." At page 521, this statement is referred to by way of adding to its authenticity, as support to another. However, soon after the Jefferson "Writings" were published, and about fourteen years after Bayard's death, Mr. Clayton, Senator from Delaware, jealous of the honour of his State, and justly confident in that of his great predecessor\* called on Mr. Livingston and Gen. Smith, Senators, the one from Maryland, the other from Louisiana, in a full sitting of the Senate of the United States, to declare whether this statement of Mr. Jefferson in regard to Mr. Bayard, was true or false. These gentlemen thus openly interrogated, though both were partizans of Mr. Jefferson, and had voted for him in preference to Burr, felt themselves compelled to confess that they were unable to confirm the statement of Mr. Jefferson, as they had not the least knowledge of the circumstances it mentioned, either in regard to Mr. Bayard or to themselves.

To give a brief and subdued account of Mr. Jefferson's imputations against Marshall, it is sufficient to say, that he repeats the following allegations, viz: that as a statesman, Marshall is a monarchist; as a diplomatist, a mountebank and impostor; as an author, false and libellous; and as a Judge, partial and corrupt. This last tendency of his vilification was so strong, that in his annual message to Congress of December, 1807, he recommended indirectly the impeachment of the Chief Justice.

As to the political creed of Marshall, it is known to have coincided with that of Washington and of the patriotic statesmen who supported his administration. His reputation for historical truth and candour, has received, as was observed, all the honour of Mr. Jefferson's invective, and may now be considered more solid than brass or marble. It is as if a treatise by Hannibal were found confirming by ineffectual denials or falsified contradictions every statement in Livy respecting the characters of Fabius, Marcellus, Claudio, and Scipio, and the events of the second Punic war.

His character as a minister of justice, it would not become so humble a pen as mine to vindicate, or even to commend. The indefinite embargo Congress, although unkennelled, and hallooed, did not dare to approach its tranquil majesty. The leaders growled hatefully around, the blabbers yelped at a distance; but the 'hunter of men' had to retire successless and chagrined.

As a diplomatist, Marshall had but a short career, and was employed only upon a special mission. The nature of this has been so little inquired into, that of the thousands who at first believed,

\* Mr. Bayard was a citizen of Delaware, and for a long time a Senator from that State.

and finally discredited, the imputations of Mr. Jefferson, not ten individuals understood the occasion of them, deriving their first impressions from political infatuation with regard to Mr. Jefferson, and owing their relief from them to the irresistible but silent force of Marshall's integrity.

You will recollect that the lever with which Mr. Jefferson over-turned the federal party, was the charge that they were manœuvring to introduce a monarchy, modelled on the forms of the British government, and in close alliance with, if not in actual resubjugation to, it. A direct consequence, in his tactics, was, the allegation that their policy was always favourable, and sometimes subservient, to Great Britain. This imputation was of course attached to every measure which was intended to resist the belligerent injustice, or arrogant amity of France. And in order to enjoy its full effect, Mr. Jefferson, as has been already mentioned, withdrew from the cabinet in 1793, fearing that the necessities of his office would expose him to the slanders he was instigating against his colleagues and his chief.

These professions and views, it will be readily perceived, caused the political ascendancy at which he was aiming, to depend on his success in making his fellow-citizens believe, that all our policy with regard to France was wrong; and *e converso*, that her conduct towards us, if not right, was at least excusable. So that having incessantly denied or extenuated her outrages at the risk of his political prospects, it came to pass that in the course of their progressive enormity, he was compelled, either to retract a whole chain of false assertions, or to follow them up by still more daring fabrications. The stricture of this alternative upon his ambition became almost spasmodic, when the delirious atrocities of the French directory, seemed to increase in a higher ratio than even his capacity for misrepresentation could keep pace with, and threatened to render war between France and the United States inevitable, by making the apologists of France open friends of our public enemy. For had this event happened, it could not have failed to pull down the ladder of fabrications on which Mr. Jefferson had almost reached the pinnacle of power.

In a case like this, Mr. Jefferson was not a man to hesitate.—He commenced, accordingly, a new series of inventions and misrepresentations in regard to the conduct of the French and American governments, and in reference to the ministers employed by the latter. From among these Marshall was singled out as the object of peculiar slander, which never relenting in violence, was terminated only by its author's death.

The manner in which Marshall and his colleagues, Gen. Pinckney and Mr. Gerry, were received, or rather insulted by the French government, is described by Marshall in his *Life of Washington*.\*

\* Vol. V. pp. 741, 42, 43, 44.

It was represented in very similar terms in the despatches of the mission to their government, and by exciting general indignation among the people, who cried out, “millions for defence, not a cent for tribute,” shook the whole frame work of popularity which Mr. Jefferson, as the leader of the French party in the United States had acquired.

It is not within the scope of this undertaking to explain the state of our differences with France, at that time; to trace them to their origin, or to follow them out to their close. The undertaking may perhaps be forced upon me hereafter. If it should, I shall be able not only to assign a proper degree of praise to the conduct of Marshall, but to show that as Mr. Jefferson, in the pursuit of power, had endeavoured to disorganize the country at home, so he strove, for the same object, to humiliate it abroad;\* and that since the United States became an independent nation, its rights and honour have never been so shamefully abandoned by any citizen, as they were on occasion of the outrages of France, by the very man who slandered Gen. Lee, and calumniated Chief Justice Marshall; accused Hamilton of treasonable designs, and reproached Washington with having “truckled servilely to England.”

For the present, after referring the admirers of Mr. Jefferson’s patriotism, to this letter of diplomatic counsel to Mr. Gerry, placed at the foot of the page,† it will be sufficient to remind you, that

[\* Gouverneur Morris treats Mr. Jefferson’s conduct very humorously in a letter to Mr. Parish, which see in Vol. III. p. 176, of his life by Sparks.]

Philadelphia, June 21, 1797.

+ MY DEAR FRIEND,—It was with infinite joy to me, that you were yesterday announced to the Senate, as Envoy Extraordinary, jointly with General Pinckney and Mr. Marshall, to the French republic. It gave me certain assurances that there would be a preponderance in the mission, sincerely disposed to be at peace with the French government and nation. Peace is undoubtedly at present the first object of our nation. Interest and honour are also national considerations. But interest, duly weighed, is in favour of peace even at the expense of spoliations past and future; and honour cannot now be an object. The insults and injuries committed on us by both the belligerent parties, from the beginning of 1793 to this day, and still continuing, cannot now be wiped off by engaging in war with one of them. As there is great reason to expect this is the last campaign in Europe, it would certainly be better for us to rub through this year, as we have done through the four preceding ones, and hope that, on the restoration of peace, we may be able to establish some plan for our foreign connexions more likely to secure our peace, interest, and honour, in future. Our countrymen have divided themselves by such strong affections, to the French and the English, that nothing will secure us internally but a divorce from both nations; and this must be the object of every real American, and its attainment is practicable without much self-denial. But, for this, peace is necessary. Be assured of this, my dear Sir, that if we engage in a war during our present passions, and our present weakness in some quarters, our Union runs the greatest risk of not coming out of that war in the shape in which it enters it. My reliance for our preservation is in your acceptance of this mission. I know the tender circumstances which will oppose themselves to it. But its duration will be short, and its reward long. You have it in your power, by accepting and determining the character of the mission, to secure the present peace and eternal union of your country.

Marshall in his historical account of this mission, observes that both the French Minister of foreign affairs, Talleyrand, and certain unofficial, though real agents of the French Government, demanded as a preliminary to negociation, the advance of a large sum of money by the United States to France, and that in the despatches of himself and his colleagues to their own government, it was stated that the written communications of these unofficial agents requiring this advance of money, or in lieu of it a *douceur* of fifty thousand pounds to Talleyrand, were signed with the letters X. Y. Z.

These despatches Mr. Jefferson insists were written by Marshall for the purpose of deceiving the people of the United States as to the disposition and conduct of the French Government, and he describes them and their author in language of which the following quotations afford fair specimens. In a letter of the 11th of October, 1798, to Stephens T. Mason, a Senator from Virginia, (Vol. III. p. 402,) he calls the indignation produced by these demands of Talleyrand "the X. Y. Z. fever." In one to John Taylor, of the 26th of November, (p. 403,) "the X. Y. Z. delusion." To Mr. Gerry, (p. 410,) he says, the January following "when most critically for the government the despatches of the 22nd of October, prepared by your colleague Marshall, with a view to their being made public, dropped into their laps." To Edmund Pendleton, a few days after, he writes on the same subject, and observes, (p. 414,) "You know the wicked use that has been made of the French negociation; and particularly, the X. Y. Z. dish cooked up by (a set of asterisks put for Marshall) where the swindlers are made to appear as the French government." To Kosciusko (then in Paris) he writes on the 21st of the same month, (p. 422,) "The wonderful irritation produced in the minds of our citizens by the X. Y. Z. story, has in a great measure subsided." To Gideon Granger, afterwards his Post-

If you decline, on motives of private pain, a substitute may be named who has enlisted his passions in the present contest, and by the preponderance of his vote in the mission may entail on us calamities, your share in which, and your feelings, will outweigh whatever pain a temporary absence from your family could give you. The sacrifice will be short, the remorse would be never-ending. Let me then, my dear Sir, conjure your acceptance, and that you will, by this act, seal the mission with the confidence of all parties. Your nomination has given a spring to hope, which was dead before.

I leave this place in three days, and therefore shall not here have the pleasure of learning your determination. But it will reach me in my retirement, and enrich the tranquillity of that scene. It will add to the proofs which have convinced me that the man who loves his country on its own account, and not merely for its trappings of interest or power, can never be divorced from it, can never refuse to come forward when he finds that she is engaged in dangers which he has the means of warding off. Make then an effort, my friend, to renounce your domestic comforts for a few months, and reflect that to be a good husband and good father at this moment, you must be also a good citizen. With sincere wishes for your acceptance and success, I am, with unalterable esteem, dear sir, your affectionate friend and servant,

TH: JEFFERSON.

master General, August the 13th, 1800, (p. 438,) "In this state" (Virginia) "a few persons were deluded by the X. Y. Z. duperies." To Dr. Rush, September 23d, (p. 441,) "The delusion into which the X. Y. Z. plot showed it was possible to push the people." After repeating on various occasions these or similar sneers and calumnies, we find him solemnly bequeathing them for historical truths to posterity in the introduction to his *Anas.* (Vol. IV. p. 452.) Speaking of the federalists he there says, "The horrors of the French Revolution then reigning aided them mainly, and using that as a raw head and bloody bones, they were enabled by their stratagems of X. Y. Z. in which Marshall" (here asterisks again are used) "was a leading mountebank, &c."

Here we have the statements of Chief Justice Marshall and of General Pinckney on one side, in respect to transactions in which they were personally engaged, and on the other the contradiction of Mr. Jefferson, who was three thousand miles from the scene of these transactions. Putting aside the motives by which these parties were influenced, and their comparative qualifications, it must be admitted that if an impartial inquirer could hesitate between them, his belief would be determined to that statement, whichever it might be, which the testimony of a third party, competent and disinterested, should be found to confirm. Now it turns out that the testimony of a third party, competent and disinterested, confirms the statement of Marshall and Pinckney in every particular. Of consequence it is impossible for any honest man to believe the statement of Mr. Jefferson.

The Emperor Napoleon, who, before his expedition to Egypt, was intimate with the councils of the Directory, and after his return overthrew that profligate oligarchy, and assumed the government of France, in his dictations at St. Helena, describes minutely the differences between the United States and France.

After observing that the measures taken by the Directory against the United States were equivalent to actual war, and mentioning the appointment of Messrs. Marshall, Pinckney, and Gerry, as plenipotentiaries, to treat for the re-establishment of a good understanding, he says:—

"In consequence of the events of the revolution the federal party in the United States had obtained an ascendancy, but the democratic party was notwithstanding more numerous. The Directory thought to give greater force to the latter, by refusing to receive the two American plenipotentiaries who belonged to the federal party, and by consenting to receive the third who was of the opposite party. The Directory declared, moreover, that they could not enter into any negociation whatever, until America should have made reparation for the grievances of which the French republic had cause to complain. The 18th of January, 1798, they proposed a law to the two councils enacting that the neutral character of vessels should not be determined by their flag, but by the nature of

their cargoes, and that all vessels, laden in whole or in part with English merchandise, should be subject to confiscation."—"The result of this law was disastrous for the Americans; French privateers made a number of prizes, and by the terms of the law they were all good. For it was sufficient for an American vessel to have only a few tons of English merchandise on board, to subject the entire cargo to confiscation. At the same time, as if there had not been already sufficient cause of resentment and alienation between the two countries, the Directory demanded of the American Envoys a loan of forty-eight millions of francs, grounding the demand on the loan which the United States had formerly contracted with France, for the purpose of enabling them to succeed in escaping from the yoke of England. Certain intriguing agents, with which sort of instruments the office of foreign relations was at that period abundantly supplied, insinuated that the demand of a loan would be desisted from, upon the advance of twelve hundred thousand francs, to be divided between the Director B\*\*\*\*\* (Barras) and the Minister T\*\*\*\*\* (Talleyrand.)\*\*"

Marshall's historical account, and the official statements made by himself and Pinckney are here confirmed in every particular; the non-reception of the two federal envoys, the demand of a loan of one million sterling, of a *douceur* of £50,000 sterling, by the agents of Talleyrand, for his and Barras's benefit—are all distinctly confirmed by a man, who besides being fully acquainted with the subject, was no party to the difference between the French and American governments, or to the contention between the federal and democratic parties, and who probably never saw, as he certainly does not refer to them, either Marshall's historical, or diplomatic, account of these proceedings.

In addition it may be observed this statement of Marshall respecting the infamous demand of Talleyrand, though thus confirmed by the dictations at St. Helena, has never been denied by any person of consideration in the world excepting Mr. Jefferson.

Here I shall conclude—leaving the reputation of Marshall protected, not by the buckler of Napoleon's testimony, but by the panoply of his own virtues. The man who assailed him with unrelenting abuse, reviled and hated his great and gifted associates—patriots who were stamped by their Creator with marks of merit and renown. Of that man, who endeavoured to destroy the temple of American glory, and to build of its rubbish, a shrine for the worship of his own image, it may be said with perfect truth, that to those by whom he was the most honoured, he was the least known.

\* Memoires de Napoleon, Tome II. pp. 107, 8, 9, 10.

[\* There is nothing so remarkable in Mr. Jefferson's Writings as the perpetual contradiction to be found between their different portions. Mr. Tucker, in the concluding paragraph of his biography, says that Mr. Jefferson, "beyond all his cotemporaries, has impressed his opinions of government on the minds

of the great mass of his countrymen." But the reader of Mr. Tucker's work, as well as of Mr. Jefferson's Writings, will search in vain to find out what those opinions were. Mr. Jefferson is cited universally by those who are pleased to denominate themselves the states' rights party, as the founder of their faith; and the nullifiers, who regard themselves to be the stricter sect of that party, claim him as the author of their creed. Indeed it seems to be admitted that those Kentucky resolutions of which Mr. Jefferson was the author, may be fairly referred to as authority to sustain it. If, therefore, we should expect to find Mr. Jefferson's opinions and practice consistent and uniform upon any important subject, it would be that of State sovereignty, or State rights, or those peculiar Virginia doctrines whose advocates never lose an opportunity of proclaiming him as their leader, apostle, and political saint. Let us, however, turn from their declamations to their apostle's own epistles. In one to Col. Monroe, dated August 11th, 1796, on page 43 of Vol. II., he says: "There never will be money in the treasury till the confederacy shews its teeth. *The states must see the rod; perhaps it must be felt by some of them.*" \* \* \* \* \* Every rational citizen must wish to see an effective instrument of coercion, and should fear to see it on any other element than the water. A naval force can never endanger our liberties, nor occasion bloodshed." To Col. Carrington he writes, August 4th, 1787, when propositions to amend the Articles of Confederacy were agitating the country: "It has been so often said as to be generally believed, that Congress have no power by the Confederation to enforce any thing; for example, contributions of money. It was not necessary to give them that power expressly, *they have it by the law of nature.* When two parties make a compact, there results to each a power of compelling the other to execute it. Compulsion was never so easy as in our case, where a single frigate would soon levy on the commerce of any state the deficiency in its contributions." Here then we have Mr. Jefferson's authority for the odious federal doctrine of deriving power by implication, and that for the monstrous purpose of coercing a sovereign state! If any thing could add to the horror of these suggestions, it would be that the peculiarly federal instrument, a navy, a frigate, was to be used as the rod to inflict this abominable chastisement. But if the states were subject to coercion under the old Confederation, what must they be under the present Constitution, which has so much more impaired their sovereignty. Yet such is the infatuation of some Jeffersonianists—such the depth of those shades of ignorance and prejudice in which they hatch their conclusions, that perhaps they will deny what I have taken for granted, and require some proof derived from their idol's writings, that he ever impugned the sovereignty of the states since the adoption of the present Constitution, before they will believe him guilty of a heresy which conflicts so much with their creed. A letter of his to General Knox, dated August 10th, 1791, (Vol. III. p. 120,) will furnish the evidence required. It begins:

"Dear Sir,—I have now the honour to return you the petition of Mr. Moultrie on behalf of the South Carolina Yazoo Company. Without noticing that some of the highest functions of sovereignty are assumed in the very papers which he annexes as his justification, I am of opinion that government should firmly maintain this ground; that the Indians have a right to the occupation of their lands, independent of the states within whose chartered limits they happen to be; that until they cede them by treaty or other transaction equivalent to a treaty, no act of a state can give a right to such lands; that neither under the present constitution nor the ancient confederation, had any state or person a right to treat with the Indians, without the consent of the general government; that that consent has never been given to any treaty for the cession of the lands in question; that the government is determined to exert all its energy for the patronage and protection of the rights of Indians, and the preservation of peace between the United States and them; and that if any settlements are made on the lands not ceded by them, *without the previous consent of the United States,* the government will think itself bound, not only to declare to the Indians that such settlements are without the authority or pro-

tection of the United States, but to remove them also by the public force." Well might Mr. Tucker remark, (Vol. I. p. 358.) "These doctrines are repugnant not only to the claims set up by the state of Georgia to the Indian lands within its limits, but also to the doctrines of exclusive sovereignty which have been asserted by South Carolina, and which it deserves to be remarked, Mr. Jefferson's authority is mainly relied on to support." Indeed, no doctrine could be advanced more derogatory to that sovereignty which is assumed for the states by the disciples of Mr. Jefferson than that just cited from his pages, and which he promulgated under his official responsibility as Secretary of State, as a guide for the conduct of the Secretary at War. For it must be remembered that the constitution does not touch this subject at all, any further than it is embraced by that clause which gives Congress power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, among the several states and with the Indian tribes;" and that which contains the general prohibition against any state's making "any treaty, alliance or confederation." Yet this was enough for Mr. Jefferson by implication to oust a state of its jurisdiction and sovereignty over the lands within its own "chartered limits," because they "happen to be" the hunting grounds of a tribe of savages; and he distinctly declares that this limited corporation, the government of the United States, will remove by force settlements which may be made under the sovereign authority of a state!

Mr. Jefferson has also been universally and clamorously cited by those who claim to be his more exclusive followers, as the constant opponent of the designs, which they have charged upon the federalists, to create a powerful and splendid central government, which would at length swallow up the sovereignty of the states. Among the proofs alleged to fix upon the federalists this design against the states, is their interpretation of the constitution to give to the general government a power to make roads and canals, &c. Let us see to what extent Mr. Jefferson has been opposed to these federal schemes of centralization; and to do that more distinctly, let us, in the first place, see how far he was inclined to crush them in the bud. In a letter to Judge Hopkinson of Pennsylvania, written from Paris, March 13th, 1789, (Vol. II. p. 438,) he writes: "You say I have been dished up to you as an anti-federalist, and ask me if it be just. My opinion was never worthy enough of notice to merit citing; but since you ask it, I will tell it to you. I am not a federalist, because I never submitted the whole system of my opinions to the creed of any party of men whatever, in religion, in philosophy, in politics, or in any thing else, where I was capable of thinking for myself. Such an addiction is the last degradation of a free and moral agent. If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all. Therefore, I protest to you, I am not of the party of federalists. *But I am much farther from that of the anti-federalists.* I approved from the first moment of the great mass of what is in the new constitution, the consolidation of the government, the organization," &c. &c. We have thus Mr. Jefferson's own assertion that, through the hottest of the contest for the establishment of this splendid central government which is so much the dread of his disciples, he was as much of the party of federalists as he could be of any party—even of one which would conduct him to heaven, and without following in whose ranks he would be excluded from those seats of bliss. And we have here also his authority that that boast of his disciples of being party men—that those appeals they are forever making to party feeling, "is the last degradation of a free and moral agent."

But it may be said that this federal bias on the part of Mr. Jefferson was in the early purity of that party, and before it had, by strained interpretations of the constitution, sought to erect upon it that splendid government to which he so strenuously objected. Mr. Tucker (in reference to a letter of Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Sparks, of January 2, 1824, in which the former proposes that the public lands should be applied to purchasing and colonizing all the slaves in the United States) says, (Vol. II. p. 466,) "He then shows, as on all other occasions, that his construction of the constitution is strict or liberal, according as the national good would be best promoted." It would have been charitable, at least, to have attributed a similar patriotic motive to the liberal construction

which the federalists are charged with giving to the constitution. But far be it from me to attribute to the great leaders of that canonized party any such uncertain and presumptuous rule of interpretation. Theirs was derived, not from fancies of what might be for the national good to-day, and harm to-morrow, but from the immutable laws of right reason, and the best ascertained principles of judicial science. These led them so to construe the constitution as to attribute to the government which it established the power, under certain circumstances, to make roads and canals. The great sin imputed to this interpretation is, not that it proceeded from an error of judgment, but from a criminal design to invest the federal government with a degree of power and extent of patronage which would be fatal to the proper sovereignty of the states, lead to consolidation, and ultimately to monarchy, the first and last love of the federalists. Now, in Mr. Jefferson's second inaugural address, he recommends an amendment to the constitution, by which the surplus revenue of the United States might be applied, in time of peace, "to rivers, canals, roads, arts, manufactures, education, and other great objects, in each state." (See Tucker, Vol. II. p. 182.) And in his message to Congress at the session which followed, he repeats the same recommendation. (Same Vol. p. 215.) Thus we see that Mr. Jefferson was for going further than the federalists in giving these obnoxious powers to Congress. They were contented that they should be incident and limited; he was for conferring them as independent and general, and for adding to them the patronage of "arts, education, and other great objects in each state." What these "other great objects" were, we are not told; but the phrase is at least as comprehensive as "the general welfare," for a desire to apply the national revenue to which the federalists have been so much abused by the idolaters of this same Mr. Jefferson.

We have before seen that in a letter to Mr. Monroe, of January 2, 1815, he reprobates that incorrigibility "in our financial course" which continued to reject that very funding system, drawn from the British model, for the adoption of which he and his followers had so often denounced the federalists.

After inconsistencies of the magnitude of those just exhibited, and in relation to doctrines which are mainly supported by the authority of Mr. Jefferson, the reader will be less surprised at a change of his views upon a subject in regard to which his influence has been more pernicious to his country, and a reference to which is peculiarly appropriate to a note upon the character of Marshall. Of course I allude to the judiciary.

In his letter to Judge Hopkinson above cited, after mentioning his approval of "the qualified negative on laws given to the executive" by the constitution, he adds, "which, however, I should have liked better if associated with the judiciary also, as in New York." To Mr. Madison he writes from Paris, March 15, 1789, in answer to a long, profound, and admirable letter on the subject of the constitution; and in this reply, which is quite a dissertation, will be found the following passage. (Vol. II. p. 442.) "In the arguments in favour of a declaration of rights, you omit one which has great weight with me; *the legal check which it puts into the hands of the judiciary*. This is a body, which, if rendered independent and kept strictly to their own department, merits great confidence for their learning and integrity. In fact, what degree of confidence would be too much for a body composed of such men as Wythe, Blair and Pendleton? On characters like these, the '*civium ardor prava iubentium*' would make no impression."

Here we see Mr. Jefferson the advocate for an independent judiciary, to be a check alike upon the government and the people. How different his sentiments were towards that body the instant it became a check upon his power, and ever afterwards, is too well known to need illustration. Even Mr. Tucker cannot refrain from remarking his inconsistency upon this subject; (Vol. I. p. 281;) and the warmest admirers of Mr. Jefferson will unite with the great body of his fellow citizens in testifying that Chief Justice Marshall, the object of his unremitting obloquy, was not inferior to his illustrious friends, Wythe, Blair and Pendleton, in all or any of the qualities and accomplishments which exalt a Judge or adorn a man.

To assign motives is generally a perilous task, and often an invidious one; and it will be entirely consistent with the humble share I have taken in the present publication to permit the reader to penetrate the causes of these great changes in Mr. Jefferson's opinions. But this may be abundantly proved from his writings, that nothing ever stood so high in his favour as not to become the object of his attack, as soon as it became a source of irritation. The public press of this country affords a remarkable illustration of this fact. His early reflections upon the nature of our government and the situation of our people, sparsely scattered over an immense territory, made him perceive so clearly the necessity of some public vehicles of intelligence, that he did not hesitate to say, that "were it left to me to decide, whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." (See Tucker, Vol. I. p. 230.) But in following his correspondence, we shall find that he first fell out with the federal prints, and then those of his own party began to share his reproaches as they produced his displeasure, until at last the whole are embraced in such sweeping denunciations as the following. In a letter of January 11, 1807, to a Mr. Norvel of Philadelphia, he says, (Vol. IV. p. 80,) "It is a melancholy truth, that a suppression of the press could not more completely deprive the nation of its benefits, than is done by its abandoned prostitution to falsehood. Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle." \* \* \* \* \* "I will add, that the man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors."

To Col. Monroe he writes, May 5, 1811, in relation to some misunderstandings among his friends at Washington, (Vol. IV. p. 164,) "These incidents are rendered more distressing in our country than elsewhere, because our printers ravin on the agonies of their victims as wolves do on the blood of the lamb. But the printers and the public are very different personages. The former may lead the latter a little out of their track, while the deviation is insensible; but the moment they usurp their direction and that of their government, they will be reduced to their true places. The two last Congresses have been the theme of the most licentious reprobation for printers thirsting after war, some against France, and some against England. But the people wish for peace with both. They feel no incumbency on them to become the reformers of the other hemisphere, and to inculcate, with fire and sword, a return to moral order. When, indeed, peace shall become more losing than war, they may owe to their interests what these Quixottes are clamouring for on false estimates of honour."

He seems, at last, to have become so anxious for the punishment of "these Quixottes" as to have derived some consolation from the capture of Washington and the conflagration of the capitol, in the thought that these opprobrious fires might have scorched their vanities. In another letter to Col. Monroe, (January 1, 1815,) he says, (Vol. IV. p. 244,) "A truth now and then projecting into the ocean of newspaper lies, serves like head-lands to correct our course. Indeed, my scepticism as to every thing I see in a newspaper, makes me indifferent whether I ever see one. The embarrassments at Washington, in August last, I expected would be great in any state of things; but they proved greater than expected." \* \* \* \* "However, it ends well. It mortifies ourselves, and so may check, perhaps, the silly boasting spirit of our newspapers, and it enlists the feeling of the world on our side," &c. Such was, at last, Mr. Jefferson's opinion of the public press of his country, by far the greater portion of which was then, and is now, addicted to nothing so strongly as praise of him, and thus did he verify an assertion he made in his above cited letter to Judge Hopkinson, wherein he avers his great wish to keep his "name out of newspapers, because I find the pain of a little censure, even when it is unfounded, is more acute than the pleasure of much praise." (Vol. II. p. 440.)

Another class of Mr. Jefferson's ardent admirers, whose first political crow-

ings, whether in July orations or stump speeches, are swelled with the praises of his name, but whose idolatry he rewards with reproach, are designated in the following extract of a letter to Mr. Madison: (Vol. IV. p. 426.) "But when his (Coke's) black-letter text, and uncouth but cunning learning got out of fashion, and the honied Mansfieldism of Blackstone became the student's hornbook, from that moment that profession (the nursery of Congress) began to slide into toryism, and nearly all the young brood of lawyers now are of that hue. They suppose themselves, indeed, to be whigs, because they no longer know what whigism or republicanism means."

If to Mr. Jefferson's denunciations of the conductors of the public press, (which must embrace a large portion of their patrons,)—to his reproaches of the most enlightened class of our communities, which he himself calls "the nursery of Congress,"—and to the sweeping charges contained in a previous letter to Mr. Giles (Vol. IV. p. 421) against all the branches of the federal government, and especially against that "vast accession of younger recruits" (to federalism, I presume,) "who, having nothing in them" (as he says) "of the feelings or principles of '76, now look to a single and splendid government of an aristocracy, founded on banking institutions, and monied incorporations, under the guise and cloak of their favoured branches of manufactures, commerce and navigation, riding and ruling over the plundered ploughman and beggared yeomanry,"—if to all those embraced in these denunciations we add the nations of France and England, one of which he stigmatizes (Vol. IV. p. 169) as "a den of robbers, and the other of pirates,"—and, in short, all the people of Europe, whom he divides "into two classes, (Tucker, Vol. I. p. 231,) wolves and sheep," and to whose governments he prefers our Indian societies,—if, I say, we include all directly and necessarily embraced in these denunciations, it will be difficult to perceive in what large portion of mankind he reposed that confidence which is so often affirmed to entitle him to the praise of a profound and benevolent philosophy, in which he surpassed even the father of his country. It is, indeed, impossible for any just thinker, utterly to distrust one half of a community, and to repose entire confidence in the other; and yet this was the pretence of Mr. Jefferson with regard to his federal opponents and democratic supporters. How was it possible for any one, not utterly blinded by party bigotry, to repose a generous trust in the virtue, intelligence, and patriotism of a people, and yet sincerely disbelieve in the existence of those excellencies in the illustrious men whom the same people and the great Washington selected for posts of power and honour? It is incredible that Mr. Jefferson could have been guilty of such stupiditiy; and it will be an appropriate conclusion to this book, to cover the character of those whom it has sought to vindicate from Mr. Jefferson's criminations, with the mantle of his praise. It will be reversing the fabulous cure of antiquity, and making the brightness of the spear of Achilles dissipate the rancour produced by its rust.

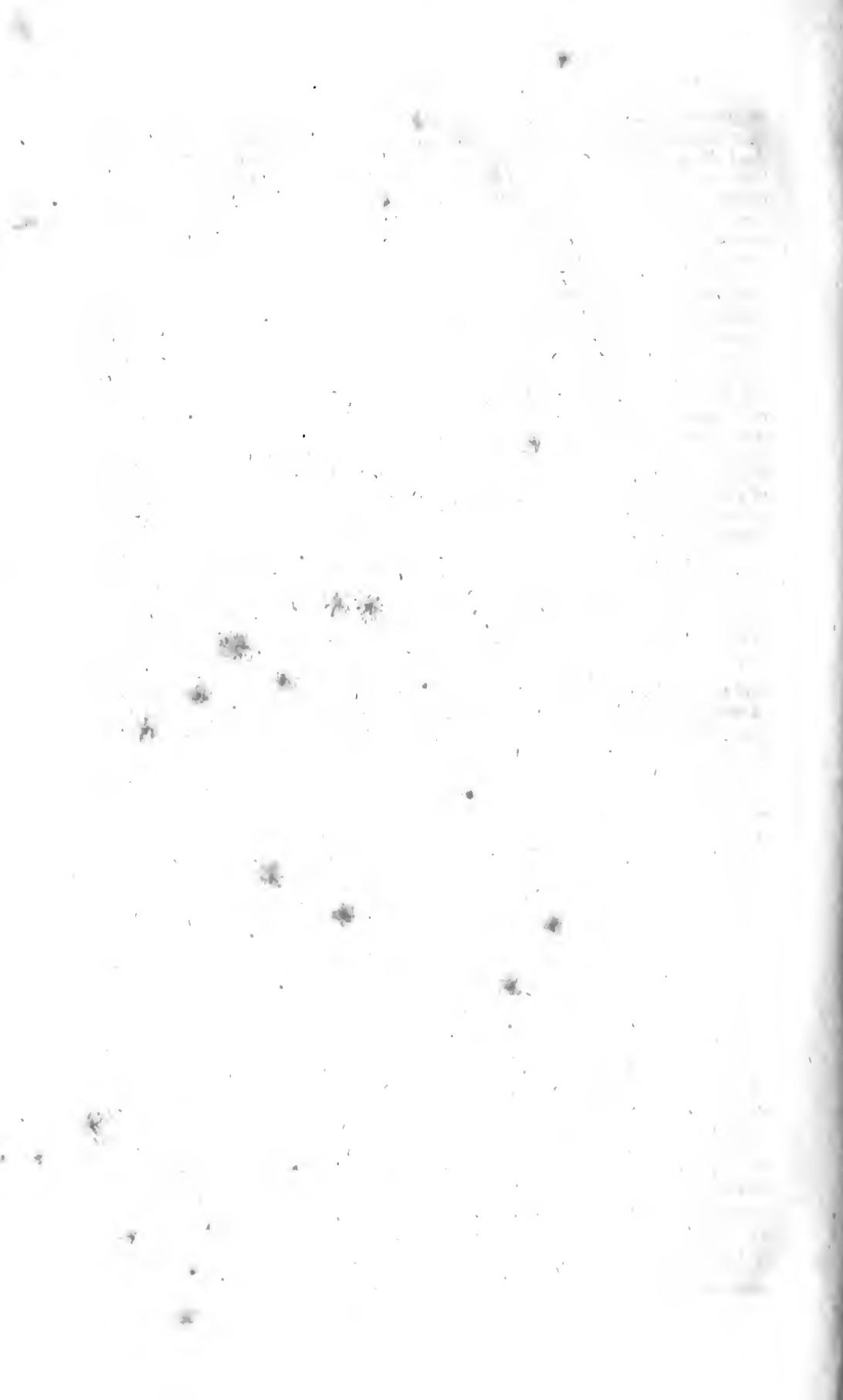
Mr. Jefferson had just passed through the great crisis in the career of his ambition, and reached the goal proposed. He describes (in a letter to John Dickinson, Vol. III. p. 454) "the storm through which he had passed" to the consummation he had so long and devoutly wished for, as "tremendous indeed." From the fearful billows he was helped to the desired landing-place by federal hands. When their rage became alarming to the safety of the country he had seen them sacrifice themselves, at once, that their blood might be as oil upon the waters. In a letter to Mr. Monroe, written during the conflict, (Vol. III. p. 452,) he says, "The very word convention gives them" (the federalists) "the horrors, as in the present democratical spirit of America, they fear they should lose some of the favourite morsels of the constitution." To Mr. Madison he writes as soon as the contest is over, (Vol. III. p. 453,) "The whole body of the federalists, being alarmed with the danger of a dissolution of the government, had been made most anxiously to wish the very administration they had opposed, and to view it when obtained, as a child of their own." He repeats these sentiments to others of his correspondents, but always excepts from "the main body of the federalists" those whom he denominates "the leaders of the late faction, whom" (he says, Vol. III. p. 455) "I abandon

as incurables, and will never turn an inch out of my way to reconcile them." The joy also with which he received the congratulation of his friends upon his new exaltation, is vividly expressed in his correspondence at that period. In the letter to Mr. Dickinson recently referred to, and written two days after his inauguration, he thus pours out his heart: "No pleasure can exceed that which I received from reading your letter of the 21st ultimo. *It was like the joy we expect in the mansions of the blessed,* when received with the embraces of our forefathers, we shall be welcomed with their blessing, as having done our part not unworthily of them." Thus it is evident that Mr. Jefferson was in a very happy frame of mind when he sat down to the composition of his inaugural address, and in a very good humour with the federal party generally. It is also evident from the letters just referred to, that it was a leading feature of Mr. Jefferson's policy at that period to conciliate that party.

Stuart, the celebrated portrait painter, used to say, I am told, that he could never take a likeness to satisfy himself until he had discovered to which of the lower animals the countenance to be portrayed bore a resemblance; nor can I distinguish the character of Mr. Jefferson's mind more expressively than by denominating it as of the chameleon order. Every reader must be struck at the rapidity with which his mind receives the hue of that of the correspondent of the hour,—the mind then in juxtaposition to his own. While a letter from the venerable Mrs. Adams is reflecting the light of her noble character and gentle virtues upon his soul, he can be softened and exalted into saying, (Tucker's Life, Vol. II. p. 167,) "I tolerate with the utmost latitude the right of others to differ from me in opinion without imputing to them criminality. I know too well the weakness and uncertainty of human reason to wonder at its different results. Both of our political parties, at least the honest part of them, agree conscientiously in the same object, the public good," &c., while we have seen how truculently he wrote to others concerning one of those same political parties. And when his mind was familiar with the thoughts and deeds of French Jacobins, it became so imbued with their atrocious colours, that to one of his correspondents of that school, he went to the tremendous length of hoping (Tucker's Life, Vol. I. p. 474) that the people of Europe would "bring at length, kings, nobles and priests to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood." But it is useless to multiply examples of this remarkable characteristic of Mr. Jefferson's mind. The reader who has not been impressed with it from his own Writings, is beyond conviction from my pen; and I have but recalled it to the attention of the candid and enforced it by the instances just cited, the better to explain the phenomenon of his celebrated inaugural address. To understand that still more clearly, it should be remembered that Mr. Jefferson rested much of his fame upon the productions of his pen; and not the less so, though, like the stag in the fable, it was doomed to find its destruction in those branching horns in which he so greatly triumphed. Hence his Notes on Virginia, his elaborate correspondence, his treasured press-copies.

It was this peculiar mind under these peculiar circumstances which was brought to the composition of the inaugural address referred to. Therefore, it was not only natural, but almost irresistible, that its author should desire to embody in the most striking form, and mould into the most pleasing shape, and array in the fairest drapery of language, the profoundest maxims of civil wisdom and the surest guides of political conduct. Where should he seek these but in the great school in which he had been taught the sublimest lessons? Whence could he derive them so well as from the experience and instruction of a life employed in the high scenes of the revolution, and among the heroic men who achieved it? Where else could he find those teachings of wisdom and virtue, whose truth and excellence were impressed upon the understandings and endeared to the hearts of the American people? While, therefore, gathering the best fruits of those lessons, the images of those who taught them continually hovered upon his memory. The noble host of revolutionary patriots crowded his avenues of thought; and under the benign influence of their intellectual presence he resumed, for the hour, the character of patriot,

in which he had once acted with that illustrious band. Then was he warmed into conceptions of the highest wisdom and the utterance of the noblest truth. And when he had arrayed in fair order and impressive form what he deemed "the essential principles of our government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration," he recorded for testimony to all mankind, that "These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and *guided our steps through* an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of *all our sages* and blood of *our heroes* have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith; the text of civic instruction; the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and *should we wander* from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten *to retrace our steps, and regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty and safety.*" Now, who were those sages, who those heroes of our revolution and reformation, unless those "Solomons in council and Samsons in the field" who had been previously abused so copiously by their present eulogist? How can any general reference to "*all our sages*" and "*our heroes*" of that age exclude Washington, Adams, Jay, Knox, Hamilton, the Lees and others, whose reputations are the subject of defence in this volume? And what "*road*" was there for us to "*regain*" in case "*we should wander* from it in moments of error or of alarm," except that which had been travelled by the administrations which preceded Mr. Jefferson's. To shew that I have not placed a strained construction upon this paper, I refer not only to the document itself, but to the history of the impression it made upon the public at the time of its delivery, and particularly to the discontent it gave to its author's political friends. Mr. Tucker confesses (Vol. II. p. 90) that it "*was not altogether relished by all of his own party;*" and that the zealots among them went so far as "*to apprehend* that he added one more to the many examples of those who, when they had attained power and place, forgot the principles they had professed in attaining it." Thus it is seen that those illustrious defendants at the bar of posterity find a complete defence against the charges brought against them by their distinguished accuser, under unworthy motives, and for corrupt purposes, in the eulogy he himself pronounced upon them, on a solemn occasion, when under happier influences and for the accomplishment of noble ends.



## POSTSCRIPT.

Just as I am about to send the last of these pages to the press, the April number of the New York Review is put into my hands. The following paragraphs from an article in it, entitled "The Congress of 1774," so happily condenses and abundantly confirms so much that is scattered through this volume, that I avail myself of the high authority of that excellent periodical to justify and enforce it. "Mr. Jefferson's credibility as an historical witness" will hereafter, it is hoped, be more justly appreciated than heretofore by the American public; and his future biographers would do well to cite, when they can, something besides his letters to establish improbable facts. As one instance, among many, of the unsatisfactory state in which the mind of the inquiring reader is left by this entire trust of Mr. Jefferson's biographers to the materials which his Writings furnish them with, I refer to the following, in Mr. Tucker's Life of him. In the table of contents to his twentieth chapter of his first volume, that author says, "Mr. Jefferson refuses a seat in the (Washington's) cabinet." In the chapter itself (p. 487) he writes: "In September, during the pendency of this commotion, (the Western insurrection in 1794,) Mr. Jefferson received a letter from Mr. Edmund Randolph, the Secretary of State, by express, which found him in bed, under a severe attack of rheumatism, inviting him to resume a place in the public councils; but the invitation was peremptorily declined." This may be true, but the following considerations render it very improbable. Mr. Jefferson had resigned the highest place in the cabinet but nine months before, against the most pressing solicitations of the President; in a manner, too, it would seem, to have precluded any reasonable hope of his ever resuming it. Still less reasonable would it have been to imagine that he would accept, or the President offer him, a place inferior to that which he resigned. Besides, the cabinet was full, and we are not informed that any member of it was to be removed to make way for him. What "place," then, "in the public councils" was he to "resume?" None, possibly, but that of Secretary of State. But could the President have made Mr. Randolph the instrument of sending off an express with an entreaty, of his own, to another person, to come and oust him of his place? Impossible, unless Mr. Randolph had volunteered in and insisted upon such a course. But if Mr. Randolph had done this, he must certainly have mentioned it, in his letter by the express, to Mr. Jefferson; if for no other purpose, to preclude an objection to Mr. Jefferson's acceptance on the score of delicacy. And it would seem equally

certain that Mr. Jefferson, in his reply, could not have passed over in silence this disinterested and, to him, most complimentary conduct on the part of Mr. Randolph. Yet Mr. Jefferson's letter contains no thanks to Mr. Randolph for his generous and flattering overture, and the latter receives from posterity none of the credit which such conduct would deserve. Therefore, it would seem that there must be some mistake in this part of Mr. Tucker's narrative. Either he has misinterpreted Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Randolph, (which, for all the reader knows, is the only authority for it,) or Mr. Jefferson mistook Mr. Randolph's. The latter supposition seems much more probable than that Gen. Washington, alarmed by the Western insurrection, sent off an express from Philadelphia to Monticello to summon its sage from his "peas and clover" to assist him in this domestic war. Yet possibly Mr. Tucker might have saved his reader from these doubts, and Mr. Jefferson's authority from being thus impugned by them, by publishing a copy of Mr. Randolph's letter.

Nor is it only about matters of fact that Mr. Jefferson's authority is deemed all sufficient by his eulogists; but they appear to regard cases of conscience to be settled by it with equal conclusiveness. Otherwise, Mr. Tucker might have thought it worth while to have made some effort to satisfy the public curiosity as to how Mr. Madison received those letters of censure and ridicule upon the conduct of Washington with which he was so often favoured by Mr. Jefferson. Mr. Tucker had peculiar facilities for doing this. But it would almost seem that there was a time when the "real Jeffersonians" of Virginia, especially, deemed it a condescension too great for them to take any trouble to satisfy any doubts which impugned the infallibility of their patron. This misty period had just begun to pass away when Mr. Tucker commenced his biographical labours; and it is to be hoped that its disappearance will be hastened by the article referred to in the beginning of this Postscript, and particularly by the following extract from it, which commences at page 349 of the eighth number of the New York Review, and extends to the end of the article.

"To resume the consideration of Mr. Jefferson's credibility as an historical witness: the second reason for questioning the value of his testimony, to which we were about to advert, after noticing his habitual inaccuracy, is, that a vein of detraction and disparagement runs through all his writings. Mr. Jefferson was in all respects what was aptly styled by the ancients "*a minute philosopher*," one of that "*sect which*" (according to Bishop Berkeley's description) "*diminish* all the most valuable things, the thoughts, views, and hopes of men; all the knowledge, notions, and theories of the mind, they reduce to sense; human nature they contract and degrade to the narrow, low standard, of animal life, and assign us only a small pittance of time, instead of immortality."

This spirit is engrained in Mr. Jefferson's writings—it would be hard to dis-

cover in them an elevated view of any subject he touches. We know of no other production that derogates a tithe as much from the integrity of the revolutionary age. There is a black thread of malevolence that seems to be woven into all that he records. It is his delight to perpetuate all the small talk and gossiping that were retailed to him, and if he discovered any decaying slander, it is pitiable to contemplate the pains he took to stuff and preserve it in his historical museum. The frailties and foibles of his contemporaries, which, even if they existed as he describes them, should have been allowed to die their natural death, form the staple of his contributions to the history of his country. The characters of his contemporaries—their motives and feelings—are wantonly disparaged by him, while some were living and others were in their graves—it mattered little which. The alternative is consequently presented of an idolatrous faith in Mr. Jefferson's authority, at the sacrifice of the fame of some of the most eminent men in our annals, or the abandonment of that authority as unworthy of confidence. This may be decided on by a few specimens; passing by all the exaggerated criminations of Alexander Hamilton's political opinions, General Knox was "a fool and a babbler,"—John Jay "avaricious and corrupt"—John Dickinson timid—Richard Henry Lee "vague and frothy"—Marshall an unfaithful partizan historian—General Harry Lee a slanderous intriguer—that honest-hearted foreigner, Baron Steuben, a conspirator against the republican institutions of his adopted country—Patrick Henry "lazy," and so on and so on. But worse injury than all this is attempted to be done to that priceless patrimony, the fame of our ancestry,—for the name of Washington is not suffered to go unscathed, and the detraction is more insidious, because the poison is mixed up with eulogy and panegyric. The solemn impression of the matchless character of that being, that we have derived from all his actions, and all his words, and all his writings, is assaulted by what meets the eye on the pages of Mr. Jefferson's writings. Washington is described by him as liable to fits of passion, in which he could not command himself—as impaired in his mind before he retired from public life—as destitute of that confidence in the capacity of the people for self-government, which is a republican's great virtue—as the dupe of unprincipled counsellors—as a vulgar, passionate, and profane swearer—and as an unbeliever, and by inevitable consequence, an accomplished hypocrite, for during his whole life he was scrupulous in the discharge of overt acts of Christian belief. On two occasions has Mr. Jefferson recorded, as coming from the lips of George Washington, the language of petulant profanity—an angry and irreverent oath;—one of these, a wretched piece of gossip, taken at second or third hand, that hearsay evidence, of which Mr. Jefferson was so unscrupulously in the habit of making registry, his biographer, Professor Tucker, has thought proper to transfer to his work to enliven its pages, and thus to aid in the

circulation of it. On this matter, we have but one question to ask, and that we ask confidently,—is there any other work with the smallest pretensions to character, that records any thing of the same description? Where is there any other memorial of Washington's oaths? The bold imputation of religious dissimulation—the insincerity of his Christian faith—rests chiefly upon a preposterous story, registered by Mr. Jefferson, as a communication from Dr. Rush, in language the most offensive: fortunately, it came to light early enough to receive the explicit and recorded contradiction of two venerable men, who had it in their power to know that it was wholly without foundation; we mean the late Bishop White, and the Reverend Dr. Ashbel Green, an eminent presbyterian divine, still surviving. But nothing can be farther from our intention, than to enter into any vindication of the memory of Washington from such aspersions. The truth of his fame is, by the force of example, a great source of moral strength to us at home—it is the cause of honour to the American name abroad: when the imagination of a great English poet turns to this country, he looks upon it as the land

*"Where Washington hath left  
His awful memory  
A light for after times!"*

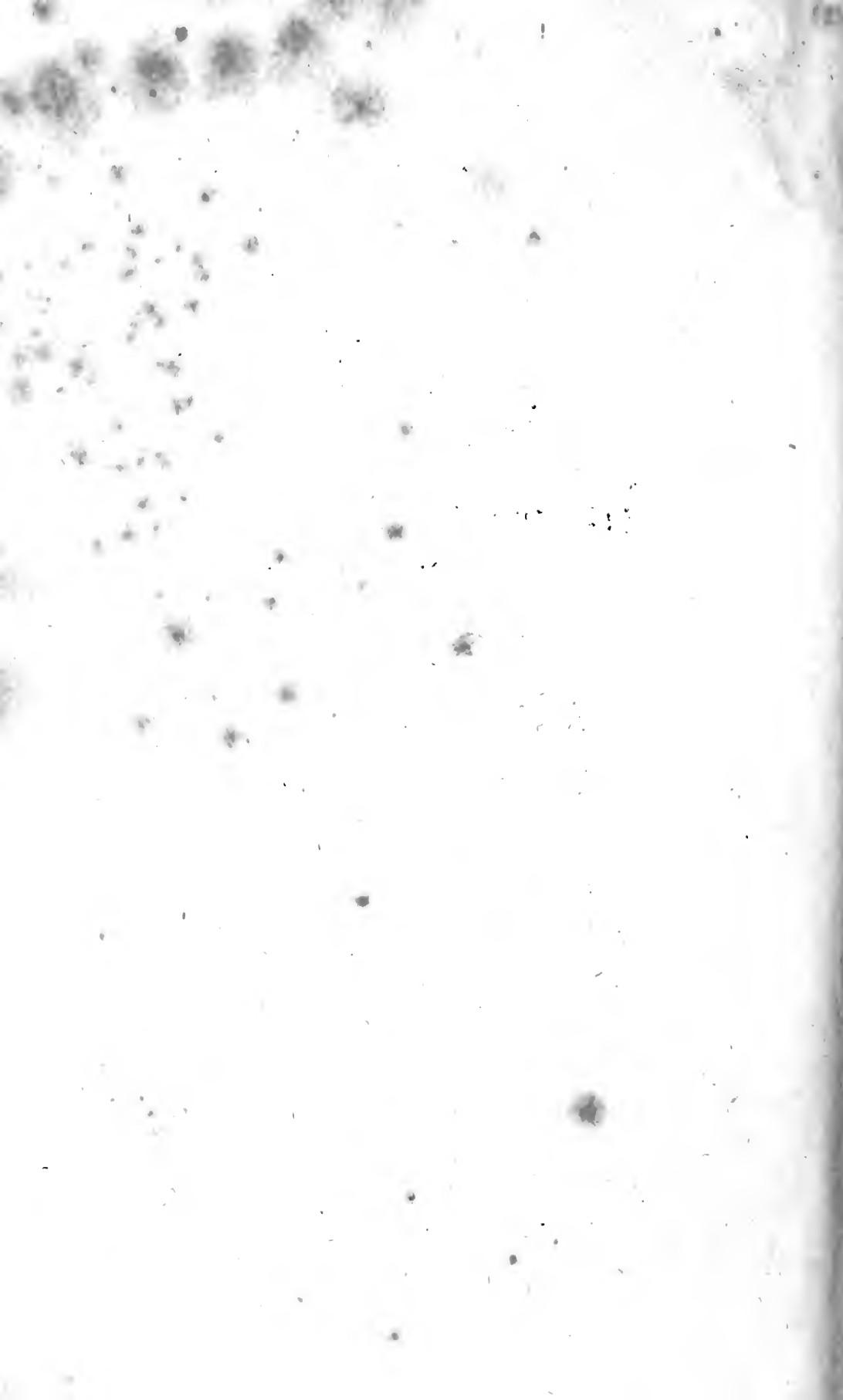
“When Mr. Jefferson recorded, what we doubt not were slanders on that memory, and when his biographer was tempted to repeat any one of them, where was their Virginia feeling, that either of them could thus allow himself to be “a witness against his neighbour without cause?” When the former registered the silly tattle, and the latter gave renewed circulation to it, we shall express ourselves very mildly, when we say, that there was manifested by neither, any extraordinary sensibility to the moral worth of a patriot's good name.

“We have cited the injurious allusions to Washington's character, not for the purpose of refutation, but as illustration of the fallaciousness of Mr. Jefferson's historical testimony. It is our delight to cling to a belief in which we have been trained, that never was the strife for freedom waged with purer or more single-hearted impulses, than in the revolution. In Mr. Jefferson's writings there is much that would divorce us from that belief, and that reason, alone, may awaken distrust in his authority. How striking, even in this respect alone, the contrast between them and that most glorious monument ever raised to individual virtue and integrity—“the Writings of Washington!” How lamentable the contrast between the labours that devolved on their respective biographers—the one striving to bring every thought, word, and writing, into the clear, broad light of day,—the other screening and excusing, palliating, extenuating, and apologizing.”









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